

The Devil Next Door

At the Interface

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'Perspectives on Evil'

Probing the Boundaries

The Devil Next Door

Toward a Literary and
Psychological Definition of Human Evil

Vera B. Profit



Amsterdam - New York, NY 2014



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In memory of my parents

Franz Johann Profit
3 June 1906—18 August 1970

Edith Elisabeth Profit
4 February 1922—1 May 2010

and for

Leonard N. Banas, CSC

With love and thanks beyond reckoning

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None of us works alone.

The University of Notre Dame
1 May 2014

Foreword

Beyond the din, the limitless freedom, the proliferating options to make more money and/or live longer, what really matters? Do I really matter?

These questions - essentially they are one and the same - must be answered, for in the search itself, value is ascribed not only to the principle or person valued, but also and inevitably to the person valuing. For better or worse we, as individuals and as a society, are defined by what matters to us.

Given the distortions of our age, it may be appropriate to look for moral guidance from those who clearly did not find the right answers, failed to enhance their lives or the lives of those around them. Sometimes we know unequivocally what is right by observing someone do it all wrong. Nevertheless, at least since Adam and Eve, the wrong has held undeniable appeal. What is it that draws us toward evil over and over again?

Angels boring? Yes - until they fall! Then the angel takes on fascination and interest. . . . When an angel assumes independent self-assertion - call it pride or refusal to knuckle under or what not - he then takes on power and the capacity to grasp our attention and even admiration.¹

These insights represent the clinical conclusions of Rollo May in his *Love and Will*. More than half a century earlier, as if he also had been trained as a psychoanalyst, Oscar Wilde phrases the observation in similar terms. He describes Dorian Gray contemplating his own by then seriously flawed portrait suffused "with that pride of individualism that is half the fascination of sin. . . ."²

Self-assertion, individualism and freedom of choice are unquestionably laudable in and of themselves, but at what point does the pursuit of these principles no longer further integrated self-actualization? At what juncture does appropriate self-interest develop into narcissism, become evil and thus not lead, as was originally intended, to the fulfilment of the human person, but, if left unchecked, unerringly to the diametric opposite, namely his or her destruction?

Where can examples be found of those who misread the early, still reversible signs of narcissistic behaviour, who did not make the requisite course correction and subsequently annihilated not only themselves, but their all too numerous victims as well? If we studied these individuals, might we not learn from them and thus possibly avoid making their mistakes? And as a result, might we not lead our lives more efficiently, more productively?

According to Alexander Solzhenitsyn we needn't look very far.

A work of art contains its verification in itself: artificial, strained concepts do not withstand the test of being turned into images; they fall to pieces, turn out to be sickly and pale, convince no one. Works which draw on truth and present it to us in live and concentrated form grip us, compellingly involve us, and no one ever . . . will come forth to refute them.³

Consequently, the first portion of this study focuses upon a multifaceted detective novel written both geographically and chronologically in close proximity to the Holocaust, the quintessence of evil. Initially published in its entirety in 1953,⁴ Friedrich Dürrenmatt's (1921 - 1990) *Der Verdacht* tells of a Swiss physician, Fritz Emmenberger, during three crucial phases of his life: as a medical student, as a concentration camp physician, and after 1945, as the CEO of a clinic. Hans Bärlach, a Swiss policeman and the novel's second major figure, endeavours to prove that Emmenberger, presently the administrator of a Zurich hospital, is identical with one Dr. Nehle, who performed medical experiments on prisoners in the concentration camp at Stutthof without the benefit of anaesthesia. With the assistance of several secondary figures, Bärlach confirms the suspicion that lies at the novel's core (260).

Prior to M. Scott Peck's *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil* (1983),⁵ the diagnosis of evil had never entered the psychiatric lexicon. In his volume, the then practicing psychiatrist proposes the radical notion that, despite their disparate natures, science and theology could complement each other while illuminating the same question. To allow for this designation within the medical sphere, Dr. Peck's case histories illustrate the salient characteristics of individual as well as group evil, though he stops short of defining either phenomenon. Drawing upon his clinical findings and corroborated by copious amounts of multi-disciplinary materials, this study identifies the eight signs of individual evil: victimization of body and/or spirit, failure to recognize the separateness of others, their depersonalization, unmitigated narcissism, the unsubordinated use of power, scapegoating, lying, and the total inability to tolerate legitimate criticism.

Since the case of Dr. Emmenberger offers ample evidence of all eight characteristics, why also study Oscar Wilde's (1854 - 1900) *The Picture of Dorian Gray*? Before responding to that question, suffice it so say that Wilde narrates the story of an English aristocrat accorded the tandem privileges of wealth and good looks. Upon the completion of his resplendent full-length portrait, Dorian utters a fateful wish. It is granted. While the canvas records not only the ravages of time, but also those of his increasingly serious transgressions, he continues to appear young as well as unsullied.

To return to the concern stated earlier, Wilde's novel merits consideration in the context of evil for five reasons.

1. Given the enormity of the Shoah's atrocities perpetrated many decades ago, perhaps only a few can identify with the scale of such a tragedy today. If the demented doctor can but repel, yet not convince us of the nature of present-day evil, perhaps the affluent, the handsome Gray might persuade us of its presence. The problem of evil should never be relegated to long ago and far away, to back then and over there. All of us are - present tense - "fearfully and wonderfully made."⁶ Sometimes the devil does not dwell next door; sometimes the devil dwells in us.

2. During his adult life, Emmenberger endeavours to hide his destructive proclivities by perpetrating the lies, by assuming the disguises mentioned earlier. These attempts, however, do not begin to match the endless number of Dorian Gray's efforts to obscure the evidence of his misdeeds. Consequently we witness what Martin Buber defines in *Bilder von Gut und Böse*: "... the uncanny game of hide-and-seek in the obscurity of the soul, in which it, the single human soul, evades itself, avoids itself, hides from itself."⁷

3. To observe these manoeuvres within such a diseased soul is rare. After several frustrating cases, Dr. Peck surmises: "it is seldom possible to pinpoint the maliciousness of the evil. The disguise is usually impenetrable."⁸ When granted the opportunity to view these consistent evasions, it should not be missed. In other words, the reader can observe Dorian for almost two decades, as he makes one ill-advised decision after another after another. We witness not only his actions, but also their motivations. By contrast, we meet Emmenberger, when he is already over sixty and the epitome of evil; at best, the reader can only catch an occasional glimpse of the intermediate steps delineating his development into an evil person. Though his actions at key junctures of his life are described in some detail, he does not articulate the rationale for his actions until shortly before his death, described in the novel's final chapters.

4. and 5. The increasing gravity of Dorian's failings and his relentless efforts to escape their consequences constitute his double life. The resultant stress not only mirrors the continual deterioration of his psychic equilibrium, but also the concomitant loss of freedom. While acknowledging Dorian's ever-increasing mental anguish, one understands Peck's insight: "[Evil persons] live their lives in sheer terror. They need not be consigned to hell; they are already in it."⁹

Some additional reflections. This study does not claim to be philosophical in nature nor primarily theological, though divine matters are mentioned now and again. Rather than theoretical or abstract, above all else, it is meant to serve as a practical guide, a handbook for helping us navigate a

dark terrain. It neither presumes to examine the sources of evil nor suggest radical cures. These pages strive only to continue the process of identifying the signs of individual evil so that we might recognize these folks before they inflict even more damage, even more needless pain. As one of the eight designated characteristics remains the relentless as well as concerted effort to project a convincing, positive self-image, we need all the assistance we can muster in order to surmount the verifiable obstacles in recognizing them. They are poor self-identifiers; consequently we cannot expect the evil themselves to lend a hand in our quest. Once again Scott Peck says it best. "If evil were easy to recognize, identify, and manage, there would be no need for this book. But the fact of the matter is that it is the most difficult of all things with which to cope."¹⁰ Of course, he was referring to his own pioneering study; nevertheless, his conclusion also pertains to my attempt to formulate the answers to some of the questions he dared to raise.

Notes

1. Rollo May, *Love and Will*, Delta, New York, 1989, p. 140.
2. Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Donald L. Lawler (ed), Norton, New York, 1988, p. 109. Throughout this book, all quotes and paraphrases from this novel and followed by page references are taken from the above-mentioned edition.
3. Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *Nobel Lecture*, F. D. Reeve (trans), Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1973, p. 7.
4. Friedrich Dürrenmatt, 'Der Verdacht: Ein Kriminalroman, 1951,' *Gesammelte Werke: Romane*, vol. 4, Diogenes, Zürich, 1991, pp. 119-265. First published serially in *Der Schweizerische Beobachter* between September 15, 1951 and February 29, 1952, Benzinger of Zurich published the novel in its entirety a year later.

Throughout this book, all quotes and paraphrases from this novel and followed by page references are taken from the above-mentioned edition. Unless otherwise noted, all translations from this as well as all other sources throughout this volume are my own.

5. M[organ] Scott Peck, *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1983.
6. *The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version. Catholic Edition*, Psalms 139: 14, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999. "I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."
7. Martin Buber, *Good and Evil: Two Interpretations*, Ronald Gregor Smith (trans), Scribner's, New York, 1953, p. 111; Martin Buber, 'Bilder von Gut und Böse,' *Werke*, vol. 1, Schriften zur Philosophie, Kösel, München; Lambert Schneider, Heidelberg, 1962, p. 633.

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8. Peck, p. 76.
 9. Ibid., p. 67.
 10. Ibid., p. 130.

Book One

Friedrich Dürrenmatt
Der Verdacht

Friedrich Dürrenmatt, 'Der Verdacht: Ein Kriminalroman, 1951,' *Gesammelte Werke: Romane*, vol. 4, Diogenes, Zürich, 1991. All quotes and paraphrases from this novel and followed by page references are taken from the above-mentioned edition. Unless otherwise noted, all translations from this and all other sources throughout this volume are my own.

Chapter One: Victimization

If one wants to seek out evil people, the simplest way to do so is to trace them from their victims.

Pledging their adherence to the Hippocratic Oath at the outset of their training or at its conclusion, medical students or physicians agree to fulfil throughout their careers a host of obligations.¹ Twice in the course of the nine-part Oath, they promise to exercise a dual responsibility: to benefit those under their care and to spare them any injury. Although at its inception, principle three pertained to dietary prescriptions; today its implications obviously range much further afield. “*I will take certain measures to benefit those suffering . . . but will avert from them harm and injustice.*”² These greater ramifications are only reemphasized in principle seven. “*No matter how many houses I enter, I will enter for the benefit of those suffering and will disassociate myself from all intentional injustice. . . .*”³ To abstain from harming their patients is yet again emphatically reiterated in principle four: “*Never will I give to any one, even if asked, a fatal substance or any advice how to obtain the same. . . .*”⁴

In obvious violation of these sacred tenets, Emmenberger murders repeatedly in a place dedicated to murder: the concentration camp at Stutthof, near Danzig. This camp - the first to be erected outside of Germany - was operational between early September of 1939 and the last days of April 1945.⁵ The darkest dimensions of his crimes are revealed appropriately enough in a midnight conversation between two friends of long-standing: Gulliver, one of Emmenberger’s Jewish victims, and Hans Bärlach, the police inspector, whose suspicion concerning the physician’s identity ignites the novel’s plot. Able to chronicle the legacy of his victimizer, whom he knew as Dr. Nehle, only with the numbing effects of liberal amounts of alcohol, Gulliver attests repeatedly to his existence.

“The official reports from the camp at Stutthof transmitted to SS headquarters do not mention his name; nor does his name appear in the appendices enumerating the members of the staff. An aura of something legendary, something illegal clung to his person, to him who had an unlimited number of victims on his clear conscience. . . . And yet Nehle existed and no one doubted that he existed, not even the most died-in-the-wool atheists. . . . So we talked about him in the concentration camps, which did not lag behind Stutthof in any regard, even if we spoke about him as if he were a rumour, rather than one of the most wicked

and merciless angels in this paradise of judges and executioners.” (153, 154)⁶

And again: “He was one of the concentration camp physicians; every camp had several such ulcerations. . . .” (159) And once more: “He was reprehensible in a way the other physicians were not, commissioner.” (159) Finally it is Emmenberger himself who admits to his participation in the tragedies perpetrated in the concentration camp located on the bay near Danzig. In the presence of the ailing and terrorized Bärlach, he wonders out loud just who would have been able to recognize him in the *Life* photograph. “Who could have recognized me? Perhaps someone who saw me in Stutthof. . . .” (243) It is the same photograph that engendered the aforementioned suspicion upon which Dürrenmatt bases his detective novel. (123, 127, 128)

Emmenberger’s predilection for murder did not conclude with the cessation of hostilities. Sitting across from his next potential victim during what according to the Swiss physician should be his last hours, Emmenberger himself admits to Bärlach that Nehle did not commit suicide, as the police records of Hamburg, dated 10 August 1945, would indicate. (140) Instead it was he who killed the man under whose name he had committed murder in the camps. “He sealed his fate himself - I will not mention how I rather hastened matters along somewhat - and simulated the most beautiful suicide imaginable.” (244) At the latest by 1937 (175) the two had made an agreement to assume each other’s identities; while Nehle as Emmenberger functioned in the medical circles of Santiago, Chile, Emmenberger as Nehle vanished “to most everyone’s astonishment into the world of the concentration camps.” (175) As Emmenberger wished to resume his life as a physician in Switzerland after the war, clearly Nehle’s usefulness to Emmenberger had come to an end. Therefore his life could be terminated as well.

And since the latter half of 1945 in a venue not only geographically, but at first glance also ideologically, far removed from Danzig as well as Hamburg, Emmenberger murders his patients in his sanatorium in the heart of Zurich. As its purpose was just the opposite of healing, the clinic’s name assumes additional meaning: Sonnenstein.⁷ (196) He continues to do so until the first days of 1949. The novel opens during the early and presumably cloudy days of November 1948 (123) and ends - all aspects of the plot now having been properly illuminated - appropriately enough on the eve of the liturgical feast of the Epiphany, 6 January 1949. (214, 258)

In the novel’s initial conversation - again in a dialogue between old and loyal friends - Bärlach and his physician, Dr. Hungertobel, raise the spectre of these serial killings. “So [Emmenberger] has his successes, is

honoured and makes his money. That's why we call him the rich uncle-' . . . 'The rich uncle. Why this nickname?' asked Bärlach. The clinic inherited the fortune of many patients, answered Hungertobel. . . ." (129)

In two subsequent exchanges, the suspicion is ruthlessly confirmed and consequently evolves into undeniable fact. While speaking with Bärlach at length, Dr. Edith Marlok, Emmenberger's fellow physician and accomplice, acknowledges not once, but several times the scope of Emmenberger's past as well as current criminal activity. "Everything Emmenberger did in Stutthof, . . . he does here, in the middle of Switzerland, in the middle of Zurich . . . unerringly he gives people what they want from him: torture, nothing but torture." (224)

In an overwhelming diatribe filled with loathing toward self as well as others, Emmenberger himself acknowledges in Bärlach's trembling presence his horrendous misdeeds not once, but on several occasions. "I need brave people for the experiments in my laboratory, and it is just too bad that my demonstration session always terminates with the death of the pupil." (249-250) And again a few minutes later, while articulating his philosophy he says: "Freedom is the courage to commit crimes, because it itself is a crime." (252) And lest there be any doubt as to his intentions both past and present, he states: ". . . I devoted myself to that which sets me free, murder and torture. . . ." (252)

But let us not neglect the second half of Peck's definition; he also mentions the destruction of liveliness and therefore does not restrict himself to the annihilation of the corporeal. Repeated attempts to diminish the capacities for knowing, for feeling, for all that contributes to the fullness of legitimate self-articulation are just as detrimental. These efforts create victims just as readily. And to paraphrase Scott Peck, it is by their victims that you shall know the evil.⁸

Even when only considering the latter half of Peck's thesis, Dr. Emmenberger's list is very long. During his years in Stutthof, even if he didn't immediately annihilate his victims, he did all he could to accentuate their physical as well as mental anguish. Though Gulliver readily admits that Emmenberger's experiments were indistinguishable from those of the other doctors in regard to their atrocity, there was an aspect, a prerequisite, which set the treatment of his victims apart.

"The diabolic aspect was that he did it all with the consent of his victims. As unbelievable as it seems, Nehle operated only on Jews, who volunteered, who knew exactly what awaited them, who - that was the condition he set - had to witness the pending operations in order to

see the full measure of their horror, before giving their consent to suffer the same fate.” (159-160)⁹

It isn't a single aspect, but a veritable viper's tangle of conditions, to borrow the Mauriac metaphor, which would only serve to increase the emotional agony of Emmenberger's victims. Under normal circumstances, to inform someone about the possible consequences of their choice can serve the interests of both parties. These are of course anything but normal circumstances.

1. Unable to claim ignorance of the outcome, a more enlightened selection should be possible.

2. The individual choosing must be aware of at least two alternatives. One course of action must for some cogent reason or another seem superior to the other. Or as J. Suhr phrases it: "For all types of decisions, from the simplest to the most complex, all methods of decision-making require deciding preferences."¹⁰ If one agreed to participate in the experiments and survived, which given the nature of vivisection was already a thoroughly remote possibility, what would the prospects be? Would the survivor be set free? According to Gulliver, in a place like Stutthof:

"Freedom meant everything, that was outside this camp, but not God's beautiful world, oh no, in our limitless deference, we could only hope to be returned to such a pleasant place as Buchenwald or Dachau, . . . where we did not run the risk of being gassed, but only of being beaten to death, where there remained a scintilla of hope to be rescued through some unpredictable intervention, in contrast to the absolute certainty of death in the extermination camps." (161)¹¹

A far more desirable alternative? A preferred outcome? Obviously those would not be inherent in the scenario in question.

3. If advised of the results beforehand, the individual choosing cannot subsequently place part or all of the blame for the choice gone wrong on the person who proffered it.

4. Through disclosure of the immediate as well as the remote consequences, the person offering the choice can attempt to abdicate part or all of the responsibility for the choice offered and not only as just mentioned for the choice made. No matter how enlightened Emmenberger's intended victims may have been, nothing would diminish the physician's guilt or mitigate his responsibility.

5. While some degree of pressure can enhance the ability to choose wisely, particularly in the area of professional judgements, the inability to

affect an even partially positive outcome and the resultant fear impedes that process.¹² The grotesque engenders paralysis; unadulterated fear tends to extinguish freedom. And all moral choice is predicated on freedom.¹³ If ever a situation would engender fear, the one illustrated certainly would. Inordinate duress invalidates any moral choice. In other words, given the parameters of the inhuman circumstances Emmenberger set into motion, none of the primary or secondary prerequisites for a choice were met; a valid choice could not be made.

In light of the arguments just advanced and the circumstances, which evoked them, the first principle of the Nuremberg Code requires referencing:

The voluntary consent of the human subject is absolutely essential. This means that the person involved should have the legal capacity to give consent, should be so situated as to be able to exercise free power of choice, without the intervention of any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress, overreaching or other ulterior form of constraint or coercion; and should have sufficient knowledge and comprehension of the elements of the subject matter involved as to enable him to make an understanding and enlightened decision. . . .¹⁴

The longer one reflects upon the situation Gulliver so movingly recalls, the more one realizes the multiple dimensions of the prevailing perversions. Scott Peck characterizes another evil situation in this summation: "Not one lie, not even two lies, but three lies, all twisted around each other in a single short sentence. It is, I suppose, a form of genius that one can almost admire for its perversity."¹⁵ In Gulliver's situation, it is not one or two or three perversions which nullify the ability to choose, but five.

It is not accidental that it was Gulliver who informs Bärlach of the infernal intricacies of Emmenberger's so-called genius. He was the only one who survived the surgical procedure offered him: "'a needless stomach resection'" (162) without benefit of anaesthesia.¹⁶ Subsequently the physician did indeed keep the promise he had made to his victim. Astonishingly enough, he gave instructions that Gulliver's health be restored to a minimal standard, he be released from Stutthof and returned to Buchenwald. (162)

In addition to Emmenberger's many nameless victims cited earlier as well as the just mentioned Gulliver, who were the others he detrimentally affected during the war years, even if they were not killed outright? Three come quickly to mind: Dr. Edith Marlok, the dwarf and Nehle.

Marlok. German born, a passionate Communist, (225) who emigrates to the Soviet Union, Edith Marlok is released to Himmler's police

as a result of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Treaty of August and September 1939. (Hitler's invasion of Russia was launched on 22 June 1941.)¹⁷ Edith Marlok's own recounting of her fate speaks eloquently to the ramifications of these agreements for her life:

"When one morning, after journeying for several weeks from Siberia in some cattle car or other, in the depth of the winter of nineteen-forty, amidst a bunch of tattered figures, I was driven across a pathetic wooden bridge by Russian soldiers . . . and as on the other side we were taken into custody by the black figures of the SS, appearing out of the mist, then I understood the manner of the betrayal, which was being perpetrated in regard to us God-forsaken poor devils, who now staggered in the direction of Stutthof, no, also the idea behind communism itself (was being betrayed), which can only make sense if it is one with the idea of brotherly love and humanism." (219)

She had been a principled individual. "I was convinced that we had to love this pitiful thing made of stone and clay, which revolves around the sun, our earth. . . ." (217) She held fast to her ideals, even when incarcerated in the Soviet gulag. (218) As a result of her adopted country's final betrayal, she arrives in Stutthof a disillusioned young woman. (219) When Bärlach asks the attractive, intelligent and highly educated Dr. Marlok how, as a Communist, she managed to survive the ordeal in the concentration camp, her answer not only reveals her state of mind, her paralysis and her despair, but also the price she paid for her life.

"That is simple," she answered and endured his gaze with a consummate indifference, as if nothing could move her any longer, no human emotion, nor the worst possible fate: "I became Emmenberger's lover." (217)

She considered the advantage offered her unique and consequently impossible to refuse.¹⁸ On one level her assessment was correct, for in the eyes of Heinrich Himmler communists were considered archenemies of the Reich, long before Germany's invasion of Russia.¹⁹ Leaving the camp alive was all that mattered to her or, she thought, could matter to her.

She did not belong to those few who incorporated the belief:

that in a concentration camp an individual may be divested of everything, but not of this: that last vestige of human

*freedom, which allows the individual to take a stand vis-à-vis his or her circumstances. And one could do just that!*²⁰

Viktor Frankl formulated the observation just cited, and he knew of what he spoke. For, as is well known, he was not only a psychoanalyst, but also a concentration camp survivor. Obviously in order for Edith Marlok to accept Emmenberger's conditions, she had to relinquish not only her political beliefs, but also her expectations of a loving relationship. In other words, she had to abandon her hopes for a meaningful future. In her lament she cites the inscription's last words above the gate to Dante's *Inferno*: "'Abandon hope, all you who enter here! I abandoned all hope.'" (219)²¹ She didn't perhaps fully realize the long-range consequences of her choice. She didn't fully realize what Frankl considered self-evident. Those inmates who had at some point or other surrendered their determination to survive were far more likely to succumb to the detrimental effects of their surroundings than those who had not.²² She wasn't completely aware that in relinquishing hope, in not projecting herself into a future which mattered to her, she would die not only to those around her, but also to herself. And not only emotionally, but quite possibly physically. Frankl states it even more emphatically. "Those who are no longer able to believe in a future, in their future are lost in a camp. Along with the future, they lose their resolve; they give up and deteriorate physically and mentally."²³ But who would condemn her? Frankl himself is the first to concede the point. "No one would dare to pick up a stone in this instance, before asking himself with absolute honesty, whether he would have done differently in a similar situation."²⁴

Furthermore, the argument's emphasis does not for the moment lie with Marlok's response, but rather the terrorizing situation with which Emmenberger confronted her. While sparing her life, he demeaned and degraded her. While making love to her, he negated her person. And that is the opposite of love; it is in fact evil.

The dwarf. Upon his arrival at Sonnenstein, Bärlach espies in the window, appropriately enough to the left of the entrance, a dwarf staring down at him.

At first he thought he was looking at a monkey, but then he realized to his amazement, that it was a dwarf like the ones generally encountered in a circus for the amusement of the audience. The small hands and feet were bare and they grasped the bars as a monkey might, while the gigantic head turned towards the police superintendent. His face was shrivelled, ancient and of a bestial ugliness, with deep

furrows and wrinkles, degraded by nature itself, which stared at the old man with large, dark eyes. . . . (196-197)

Both Emmenberger and Gulliver attest to his presence in Stutthof. While plotting the demise of Bärlach's physician and long-time friend, Dr. Hungertobel, Emmenberger admits to the now officially retired police inspector that the dwarf came to his attention in the concentration camp near Danzig. (247) Rather than kill him, as Heinrich Himmler²⁵ would have dictated, he spared his life. But just as in Marlok's case, the Swiss physician exacted a price. "Because the little monkey sensed that he owed me his life, he allowed himself to be trained to great advantage." (247) In this summation "sense" would be the operative word, for the dwarf had never mastered intelligible speech. (261, 262) Yet he could feel. He could sense not only that he owed Emmenberger his life, but also sorrow and anguish. Due to his mammoth size as well as his eloquence, Gulliver and the dwarf constitute polar opposites; nevertheless, these two befriended each other in Stutthof. In a moving passage uttered in the novel's final pages, Gulliver bears witness to his friend's unerring ability to sense his hurt, his degradation, despite his considerable limitations. "There you are my little monkey, my little animal, my little monster from hell," the Jew encouraged the dwarf with his mellifluous voice. "My poor Minotaur . . . you who so often in the blood-red nights of Stutthof fell asleep in my arms. . . ." (261)

Nehle. While countless unnamed victims as well as Gulliver, Marlok and the dwarf were all mistreated in the concentration camp, Nehle, the last of Emmenberger's wartime victims, never set foot inside Stutthof nor inside any camp for that matter. Therefore Nehle's diminishment of person may not at first glance appear as grave, if in fact it becomes apparent at all, as the pain inflicted on the others. Nevertheless he also belongs on this ignominious list of those whose lives were lessened through Emmenberger's intervention. The reasons are manifold.

As indicated earlier in this chapter, some time before 1937 Nehle and Emmenberger had agreed to assume each other's identities, each for his own purposes. The prior reference focused upon the agreement's advantages for Emmenberger. Obviously he would escape detection and criminal prosecution far more easily under an assumed name.²⁶ It neglected to note the benefits which accrued to Nehle. And in Nehle's eyes, the relief offered him from his persistent travails was worth the gamble.

Serving in the military during World War I, the Berliner's predilection for the medical field aroused the attention of a medical corps officer. After 1918, Nehle worked as a physician's assistant and prepared himself for the *Maturität*. Due to insufficiencies in mathematics and classical languages, he twice failed the requisite examinations. While perusing his

vita, Bärlach draws the justified conclusion: “The man’s talents seemed to be confined to the field of medicine.” (174-175) Nevertheless Nehle insists on practicing medicine without a license and consequently comes into the conflict with the authorities on more than one occasion. Suddenly some twenty years later, his problems seem resolved. From the remainder of Bärlach’s insights, the following inferences can be made. In 1937 using Emmenberger’s name, Nehle leaves Germany for South America. One year later, Emmenberger posing as Nehle performs brilliantly on the final examinations required for entry into medical school. Also achieving remarkable results upon taking the *Staatsexamen*, he is consequently exempted from further study. Nehle must have expected that upon his return to Germany after war’s end, he would resume his legal name and pursue his medical practice without bothersome legal wrangling. He does after all uphold his part of the agreement and remains in Chile until August 1945. While abroad he even tries his hand at submitting several articles to prestigious medical periodicals. (175) The benefits to Nehle’s self-image can scarcely be overlooked: recognition in print, he considered long overdue, and the assumption of finally practicing medicine without interference upon returning to the Continent. On the other hand, despite the image he projected, Nehle also knew that he had not and could never have earned those accolades, those privileges. On some level, he must have realized he was a fraud, a sham. After all, he had even allowed Emmenberger to operate on him so the two men would resemble each other, would seem identical.

“Let’s admit it: I myself introduced the scar into Nehle’s right eyebrow and the burn mark into his lower left arm, which I also have, in order to make us identical, one out of two.” (243)

He was simply not who he claimed to be. Any time someone is less than they could be, even if at least partially by their own hand, they become a victim.²⁷ Being an imposter is a kind of victimization. Though Nehle could evidently foresee many ramifications - particularly the positive ones - of the bargain he struck, he did not seem to acknowledge or simply did not wish to acknowledge those of a sinister nature. Perhaps he would not have consented to the agreement, had he suspected Emmenberger would take his name into the concentration camp (175), had he foreseen that to save himself, the Swiss physician would kill him. (244)

The unnamed whom he had terrorized, in addition to Gulliver, Marlok, the dwarf and Nehle, all these Emmenberger had diminished, had detrimentally affected, had victimized prior, during and just after the war

years. And as Scott Peck tells us unequivocally: "If one wants to seek out evil people, the simplest way to do so is to trace them from their victims."²⁸

Just as Emmenberger's mania for murder did not conclude with the war's end,²⁹ neither did his desire to inflict pain. Transferring his diabolical practices from Stutthof to Sonnenstein, he victimizes two individuals whom he began mistreating in the former venue: Edith Marlok and the dwarf.

By Marlok's own admission cited earlier, while at Stutthof, she had become Emmenberger's lover. In early May of 1945, the political exigencies and their resultant pressures, which prompted her decision, are no longer operative. At that point, she could have left Emmenberger, but does not. What can be deduced about their current relationship? What does it reveal about him and about her? Scott Peck contends that it is most efficient to recognize the evil by gauging how they affect those around them. Therefore the answers to these questions can be found by assessing Marlok's reaction to the physician's treatment of her. In other words, what kind of an individual has she become?

Marginalized in the first meeting between Hans Bärlach and Fritz Emmenberger, Dr. Marlok utters but three words and could thus easily have created the impression of someone rather reserved, even taciturn. (207) She is in fact intelligent, highly articulate and reveals much about herself in a subsequent and crucial conversation with the now officially retired police inspector. She not only acknowledges her role as eyewitness to Emmenberger's wartime atrocities, mentioned earlier in this chapter, thereby confirming Bärlach's suspicions on which the novel is based, but also discloses that she has progressed from eyewitness to accomplice vis-à-vis the Swiss physician's crimes. Despite his exhaustion, his malignancy, Bärlach, the consummate representative of the law, reminds her unerringly of her degeneration.

"You admit that Emmenberger, using Nehle's name, was a concentration camp physician in Stutthof?" he asked desperately. "Of course." "You also admit that he murdered Nehle?" "Why not?" . . . "If you know all that," he said, "then you're also guilty." (216)

As the novel is set in the last months of 1948 and the first days of 1949, Edith Marlok had more than ample time to notify the proper authorities of Emmenberger's transgressions, committed outside Swiss confines. She fails to do so. In addition, she acknowledges her current participation in the same horrors she only witnessed in Stutthof: "the crimes which I am asked to perpetrate." (226) She brutally confirms what Bärlach only suspected.

“Here the boss also operates without the benefit of anaesthesia. Everything Emmenberger did in Stutthof, . . . that he does here. . . .” (224)

She wasn’t always a murderess, was not that long ago an ethical woman. “Oh I had my conviction and pitted it against the world. I was convinced, as you are, superintendent, to combat evil until my last breath.” (218) How does she cope with her assaulted conscience? How does she suppress her pain, that pain caused by her awareness of the discrepancy between what she once was and is now? She becomes addicted to morphine. The drug serves a multitude of purposes. By dulling her revulsion, injections of morphine allow Marlok to assist Emmenberger in his criminal pursuits. They also impart a sense of euphoria in which she still sees a world she believes forever lost to her.

“Thus I, Edith Marlok, a thirty-four-year-old female, commit the crimes demanded of me in return for the colourless liquid, which I inject subcutaneously; during the day it affords me the courage for derision and at night the possibility of dreaming that I might possess, if only as a transitory delusion, what no longer exists: this world, as God created it.” (226)

But this acutely addictive derivative of opium can do so much more. It can and does alter Marlok’s appearance. An elderly bachelor with a self-ascribed weakness for an attractive woman, upon first seeing her, Bärlach extols the young medical doctor’s physical attributes and openly confesses his fascination with her. “The woman was beautiful . . . she was a lady, you could see that immediately, so distinguished and so reserved. . . . You could readily put her on a pedestal. . . . He looked at her once again.” (200) When he recoils in disgust at their second encounter, only then, does the police detective realize that these good looks depend upon repeated morphine injections. Without them Marlok appears to be what she has become: an addict, “an old hag,” her facial features now distended. (213) Bärlach’s observations are commensurate with those made decades earlier, concerning the effects of prolonged morphine use. “The flesh begins to fall; the face loses colour and takes on a sallow, lustreless hue and an aged expression; the teeth are loosened, and gradually even a young person becomes wizened, emaciated, and haggard.”³⁰

If someone were asked to describe Dr. Edith Marlok during the post-war years in Switzerland, what would they say? Aside from taking note of this comely young woman’s intelligence and eloquence, mention would also be made of the following: breaker of laws, partner in crime, a common

morphine addict, sometimes appearing to be much older than her thirty-four years and an individual terribly conscious of how far she has fallen.

And her attitude, how has it changed over time? What has replaced the passion and the tenacity of the young physician willing to risk so much to pursue her convictions? Great disappointment, great disillusionment can, if left unchecked, lead to a debilitating cynicism, a fatal sense of detachment, and a rampant carelessness. Ironically enough, these are standard self-defence mechanisms and Marlok does not prove the exception to the rule.³¹ In her pivotal exchange with Bärlach, Marlok's demeanour - as a physician, it is also her bedside manner - betrays over and over again that she feels herself isolated from everything and everyone. She feels utterly unreachable, utterly alone. A caring attitude bonds us to others as well as to our better selves. She does not care. Not about others. Not about herself.

In her lengthy conversation with Bärlach, her responses are characterized by such terms as: "Without paying the detective any heed . . .," (213) "He did not appear to exist for the woman." (213) Twice, mention is made of the fact that she leans, rather motionless, against the door of Bärlach's room and thus removes herself from his proximity, "both hands buried in the pockets of her lab coat." (213, 214) While the police inspector alternates between livid outrage and disease-enforced resignation, her face remains virtually expressionless. "She seemed untouched by it all." (215) Despite Bärlach's incredulous and incessant questions, she replies in a voice both "cold and dying." (216) When she admits that she survived the ordeal in the concentration camp by becoming Emmenberger's lover, it is the tone and not only the content of her answer which betrays her emotional state, the state of her soul. "'That's simple,' she answered him, indifferent to his gaze, as though nothing could move her any longer . . . : 'I became Emmenberger's lover.'" (217) Paralyzing indifference suffuses every aspect of her being. This same pervasive indifference characterizes what ideally should be her closest, her most loving relationship. "'No one matters to me, not even Emmenberger, even though he is my lover.'" (220) Indifference constitutes the diametric opposite of love.³²

A glance at some successful, if partial, attempts to define the ultimately indefinable nature of love should lend credence to this statement. Viktor Frankl emphasizes the singularity, the resultant irreplaceability of the beloved: "In love the beloved person is comprehended in his very essence, as the unique and singular being that he is; he is comprehended as a Thou, and as such is taken into the self. As a human person he becomes for the one who loves him indispensable and irreplaceable. . . ."³³ Erich Fromm goes one step further. "Erotic love is exclusive, but it loves in the other person all of mankind, all that is alive. It is exclusive only in the sense that I can fuse myself fully and intensely with one person only. Erotic love excludes the

love for others only in the sense of erotic fusion, full commitment in all aspects of life - but not in the sense of deep brotherly love."³⁴ Keenly aware of the task's difficulties, Scott Peck enters the realm of the teleological and interjects the notion of intent. The psychiatrist defines love as the "will to extend one's self for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth."³⁵ Morton Kelsey elaborates upon Scott Peck's definition: "... love is the disciplined will *and* desire to extend ourselves for the purpose of nurturing our own and another's spiritual, emotional, and physical growth and healing in order to guide people through their crises and on toward their full human potential."³⁶ Martin Buber in his memorable *Ich und Du* echoes some of Frankl's, Fromm's, Peck's and Kelsey's concerns and reminds us fervently of love's possibilities as well as its obligations:

Love ranges in its effect throughout the whole world. In the eyes of him who takes a stand in love, and gazes out of it, men are cut free from their entanglements. . . . Good people and evil, wise and foolish, beautiful and ugly, become real for him one after the other; that is, set free they step forth in their singularity and engage him as a *Thou*. In a wonderful way, from time to time, exclusiveness arises - and so he can be effective, helping, healing, educating, raising up and saving.

He concludes these reflections with the bold statement: "Love is the responsibility of an *I* for a *Thou*. . . ."³⁷

Though each of these definitions emphasizes different aspects of the inherently elusive topic, without fail, each one points to the singularity of the beloved for the lover, of the duties of one for the other and declares care and love - whether erotic or not - to be synonymous. In his brilliant disquisition on the subject, Rollo May phrases it this way. "Care is a state in which something does *matter*; care is the opposite of apathy. Care is . . . the source of human tenderness."³⁸ In other words, care and love most assuredly enhance the lives of others as well as our own; care and love are essentially salvific. Obviously those who use others solely for their own purposes do not care for them; they devalue them. By serving Emmenberger's physical desires, while blotting out her own legitimate needs, Marlok has, despite her considerable gifts, become far less than she might otherwise have been. Part of the blame for her relentless deterioration must undoubtedly be apportioned to her. Even after 1945, she elects to maintain her submissive role assumed during the war years. To paraphrase Frankl once again: who of us could be certain we would have done differently? Nevertheless Emmenberger's continuing detrimental effect upon her life should never be underestimated.

Invariably the old Biblical observation begins to take on new meaning: "In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit."³⁹

As stated earlier, Marlok was unfortunately not the only member of Emmenberger's Sonnenstein entourage whom he affected adversely in Stutthof and continues to dehumanize in Switzerland. The dwarf also numbers among his current victims. What Emmenberger intimated, (247) Gulliver confirms. The dwarf's training in measures diabolical began in Stutthof: "... weren't [you] already trained to perform such feats back in our city of slaves by the evil sorcerer Nehle or Emmenberger. . . ." (262) Today he continues to carry out the fatal deeds asked of him. In this instance however, Gulliver suspects (262) what Emmenberger states unequivocally: the dwarf killed the hapless pamphleteer and Bärlach's occasional assistant, Ulrich Friedrich Fortschig.⁴⁰ "So there was the matter of Fortschig. He was condemned to death and executed. My dwarf did good work." (239)

Upon publishing the pamphlet in which the current director of a Swiss hospital stands accused of Nazi war crimes (229-230), Fortschig did not immediately leave for Paris. Bärlach had not only instructed him to do so, but had given him the financial means to execute these directives. (188) Instead the well-meaning, though pathetic, writer so-called spent the monies on a farewell dinner with some friends and proceeded again to drink excessively. (234-235) Neither of these ill-considered acts helped to remove Fortschig from harm's way. Yet no matter how foolishly he conducted himself, he did not deserve to be murdered. The blame for his death must remain with Emmenberger. And as for the dwarf, does he bear any responsibility for Fortschig's untimely end? In his *...trotzdem Ja zum Leben sagen: Ein Psychologe erlebt das Konzentrationslager*, Viktor Frankl reminded us earlier to refrain from judging others before we have walked in their shoes. Heeding that admonition, only someone who suffered in a concentration camp as he did, who shares in his isolation (265), can speak on this misbegotten creature's behalf. Only Gulliver's point of view can and should matter. "What do we do with this little animal, which is a human being nevertheless . . . who was totally denigrated to the level of an animal, this little murderer, who is the only innocent creature among us. . . ." (262)

Incontrovertible evidence abounds that both Edith Marlok and the dwarf suffered at Emmenberger's hands in Stutthof even as they do in his Zurich clinic. Are there any others who could be added to that ignominious list, even if the evidence for their possible inclusion is not as unequivocal and the individual perhaps not as crucial to the plot's development?

In Bärlach's presence Emmenberger speculates as to who could have realized that he was identical with a former war criminal. Among the various arguments, he advances the following theory: "Either someone who

saw me in Stutthof and knows me here - a slim possibility, as those entities, I brought with me from Stutthof are under my complete control. . . .” (243) Needless to say, he could be referring to Marlok and the dwarf, but he could also have in mind another of his staff.

A master of intimidation, Dr. Fritz Emmenberger receives the seriously ailing Bärlach upon arrival in an operating theatre (204) and assigns him a studio-like room on the clinic’s death ward (207, 210, 211). Several features of room fifteen are consciously designed to make the patient ever more uncomfortable, ever more anxious. Bärlach takes stock of his unique surroundings, but reserves his particular dislike for the mirrored ceiling - “it could drive you crazy” (209) - and a copy of Rembrandt’s *The Anatomy Lesson*. (210)⁴¹ Given the opportunity to exchange this painting for another, he requests Albrecht Dürer’s *Knight, Death and the Devil*. (210)⁴² Just when the police inspector finally acknowledges that Emmenberger could not be intimidated, that Fortschig is imperilled - he doesn’t yet know that his inept friend is already dead - and that he himself is also threatened, this justifiably frightened man seems to be offered a way out of his predicament. “Rather unexpectedly Bärlach seemed to be offered a possibility of communicating with the outside world. A worker entered the room, carrying under his arm an enlarged reproduction of Dürer’s ‘Knight, Death and the Devil.’” (231) While the awkward and seemingly slow-witted fellow replaces the Rembrandt with the Dürer, Bärlach makes several loud and desperate attempts to communicate his needs and instructions. His pleas literally fall on deaf ears. “Only after the worker had left his room and had slammed the door shut rather clumsily, only then did the old man realize that he had spoken with a deaf-mute.” (233) Those who were obviously impaired were quickly designated for extinction in the earliest of Germany’s euthanasia programs. Could Emmenberger have made his acquaintance in Stutthof and simply elected to spare this unfortunate middle-aged man (231) from such a fate? As stated earlier, the compelling evidence presented in the cases of Marlok and the dwarf are lacking in this instance. Yet there is additional information, which merits consideration. In exchange for his life, the dwarf had been trained to kill. (247) In exchange for his, the deaf-mute was taught to engender increasing anxiety in someone who was already half-crazed with fear. The method was simple.

The worker shook his head repeatedly, for the picture struck him as uncanny. He turned to Bärlach and said in a peculiar, an over articulated manner very slowly, while his head wobbled back and forth:
 “The devil doesn’t exist.”

“But he does,” screamed Bärlach in a hoarse voice: “The devil does exist, fellow! Here in this hospital. Listen up! You will have been told that I am crazy and talk nonsense, but I fear for my life, for heaven’s sake, can’t you understand, for my life: That’s the truth, fellow, the truth, nothing but the truth!”

The worker had now affixed the picture to the wall and he turned toward Bärlach, grinning he pointed to the knight, who sat there motionless on his horse, and he uttered a few unintelligible gurgling sounds, which Bärlach did not understand right away, nevertheless, they finally made sense:

“Knight done for,” issued slowly and unmistakably from the misshapen, crooked mouth of the fellow with the blue overalls: “Knight done for, knight done for!” (232-233)

Nowhere in the text does Emmenberger ever overtly reveal his specific connection with the handy man, and yet his imprint seems everywhere. During one of the Bärlach/Gulliver exchanges, the Jew maintains: “‘Gulliver doesn’t leave any traces,’ he said after a short pause. ‘I work invisibly.’ Without the slightest hesitation, Bärlach replies rather matter of factly. ‘Everyone leaves traces,’ countered the superintendent.” (148)

On a literal level, Bärlach is referring to the advertisement Feitelbach places in the local newspaper, whenever Gulliver stays with him. That advertisement tells Bärlach that his Jewish friend has returned from his clandestine travels and finds himself in Berne once again. (148) But on a metaphorical level, that seemingly simple remark can be understood in an entirely different way.

For whether we wish to acknowledge it or not, all of us leave traces upon one another, all of us influence one another for good or ill. Scott Peck reminds us of this reality in his *What Return Can I Make?* He recalls an accolade overheard at a dinner he attended. One of the guests summarized the contributions of a renowned movie producer in saying: “‘He has left his mark on history.’” Peck responded to this assessment quickly. “‘We all leave our mark on history.’” He continues his reflections: “The conversation stopped dead, as if I had said something grossly obscene. Why does it make us so uneasy, this terrible importance to our lives. . . ? The responsibility frightens us. We would prefer to think of ourselves as ordinary, average, normal. We do not want the responsibility for history on our backs. But it’s there whether we want it or not.”⁴³

Reviewing the evidence just presented, it would seem the deaf-mute completes the trio of individuals - Marlok, the dwarf and the deaf-mute -

whom Emmenberger brought with him from Stutthof. But these three share other characteristics as well. All three now assist him in furthering his diabolical schemes, be they perpetrated inside or outside the confines of Sonnenstein. In other words, these victims evolve into victimizers. Leaving aside for the moment the nameless victims to which Marlok refers in her conversation with the police inspector, “the crimes which I am asked to commit,” (226) all three affect detrimentally one and the same individual who can be named: Hans Bärlach.

Ever more cognizant of the futility of his efforts, Bärlach asks Edith Marlok for help in securing his release from Emmenberger’s diabolical domain. She responds with sustained detachment, overt derision and repeatedly delineates for him the hopelessness of his circumstances. In brief, she makes matters even worse. The examples abound. Whereas in Berne, Gulliver visited his friend by entering the hospital room through a window, here in Zurich’s Sonnenstein that possibility no longer exists. “‘The window is barred,’ answered the physician and with her head indicated the location, where the rain poured down behind the iron rods.” (215) Earlier the inspector’s health was precarious; now he would seem moribund as he sees his image reflected in the infernal mirrored ceiling: “She laughed. ‘A beautiful skeleton grins at you, doesn’t it, representing the chief police detective of the city of Berne!’” (218) His repeated and desperate appeals to Edith Marlok’s battered conscience yield her final refusal: “‘You dared to enter a fox den and there’s no way out. Don’t count on me. No one matters to me. . . .’” (220) She leaves his room with a last damning gesture. Onto his bed she tosses the mail, which contains the article Fortschig wrote at Bärlach’s insistence, and a copy of the local newspaper. The latter confirms what he does not wish to believe: Fortschig’s death. (226-227)

In her calculated callousness, Marlok knows she is making Bärlach’s life even more trying. That insight distinguishes her from his second victimizer: the mentally impaired dwarf. As indicated previously, the dwarf kills Fortschig at Emmenberger’s behest. But if the police inspector had not engaged the questionable literary talents of the impoverished journalist in his pursuit of the war criminal, Fortschig would not have become a target for Emmenberger’s homicidal ambitions, no matter how ineptly he was inclined to handle himself. Yet given the policeman’s continually deteriorating condition, he could ill afford to dispense with the failed writer’s assistance. His agony becomes twofold. Upon perusing Fortschig’s accusatory prose, Bärlach concedes that the diatribe did not achieve its goal, “that he had made a mistake. The physician was not at all the type of individual who would allow himself to be intimidated.” (231) And secondly that the price paid for his cry of outrage might prove excessive. “Fortschig was in mortal danger. . . .” (231) A few moments later, while

reading of the woeful pamphleteer's demise in the paper, his fears are realized. His pain is obvious. (233) Despite his frailty, his anger quickly finds its voice. "As soon as the old man had read this, he dropped the newspaper. He dug his hands into the blanket. 'The dwarf, the dwarf!' he screamed into the room, as suddenly he understood just *how* Fortschig had died." (236)

Though immediately upon reading the article Fortschig had written, Bärlach realized that his own life was also imperilled (231), it is not until some minutes hence, when learning of Fortschig's death, that he also fears for Samuel Hungertobel's welfare. His personal physician and long-time friend had aroused Emmenberger's suspicions for a number of well-founded reasons. It is entirely plausible for Emmenberger to assume that Hungertobel might have recognized him in the *Life* photograph. They have known each other since medical school and both took part in a hiking excursion during which Emmenberger's sadistic tendencies first surfaced. (144, 243) Furthermore he does not now hide his murderous intentions. With morose delectation, he has taken it upon himself to invite Hungertobel to visit his ailing friend, Bärlach. "'In the back seat of his car my little Tom Thumb will be sitting,' replied Emmenberger." (246) Upon hearing of this malevolent plan, Bärlach responds in the same manner as when he suddenly understood how Fortschig met his death. "'The dwarf,' screamed the detective. 'The dwarf,' confirmed the physician. 'The dwarf yet again.'" (246-247)

Edith Marlok likewise spares herself no effort in reminding Bärlach just how futile his efforts are. Not only will she not help him, but his friends would also seem to be rendered ineffectual. Gulliver - he could always count on him - can no longer surreptitiously enter his room via the window. The dwarf has killed his well-meaning friend, Fortschig. And a second friend, Hungertobel, would seem to be next on his list. Though the deaf-mute does bring Bärlach a copy of the Dürer engraving, which he had requested (210), the otherwise inarticulate and simple man manages to interpret the allegory of the mounted knight as negatively as possible. Lest the frightened, ill and supposedly retired policeman fail to comprehend the utter hopelessness of his situation, three times he utters the words: "'Knight done for!'" (233)

If Gulliver would seem to be out of reach and not a single member of Emmenberger's Stutthof ensemble can or will help him, is there anyone else whom he might yet ask for assistance? Bärlach directs his penultimate request towards someone who shares his nationality, his dialect, and now his hospital venue: the nurse, Kläri Glauber. (199, 208-209) As she embodies the diametric opposite of the qualities her baptismal and family names suggest, the desperate police inspector cannot count on Kläri Glauber's assistance either. Upon his arrival at Emmenberger's clinic, he immediately envisions currying her favour (199), yet one of his earliest impressions of her proves prophetic. "In the doorway appeared nurse Kläri. To the inspector she

seemed liked a benign executioner.” (207) Dr. Edith Marlok could on occasion fascinate the elderly bachelor; nurse Glauber only repels him. Both physically and intellectually.

“[W]ith her red fleshy head”(211), “[her] massive shape” (211), her arrogant habit of folding her hands over her protruding abdomen (210) and her tactless manner, she consistently frustrates, if in fact, she doesn’t frighten him. (211) He can hardly be expected to take encouragement from some of her rejoinders. Upon his preference for *Ritter, Tod und Teufel*, she comments: “A beautiful picture for a death chamber. I congratulate you. The gentleman has good taste.” (210) Or when she twice insists: “There are no exceptions. I have never seen anyone leave Ward Three. And you *are* on Ward Three, that’s the way it is and you cannot change that.” (211, 228) Or when Bärlach inquires as to the presence of a dwarf on the hospital’s premises and she replies: “Of course’, her voice came in a brutal tone from the doorway. ‘You saw him.’” (211)

Kläri Glauber deems herself a convincing writer and has apparently published a small treatise, titled “Death, the Goal and Purpose of our Conversion. A practical Guide.” (211) Bärlach’s assessment of her pamphlet’s content and her resultant approval of Emmenberger’s current sequence of murders is unequivocal: “That’s nonsense, called out the ailing man angrily. . . .” (228) She continues unabated: “Earlier he killed out of hate, now he does so out of love,’ replied the nurse. . . . You need only read my brochure.” In the face of such unadulterated and self-satisfied stupidity, he becomes incensed. “Emmenberger is a criminal,’ gasped the commissioner, beside himself in the face of such bigotry.” (228) Perhaps Kläri Glauber herself does not kill anyone, perhaps she only brings her patients coffee and a bite to eat (227), perhaps she only annoys, exacerbates and enrages. Possibly she actually does believe what she purports to believe. But as Scott Peck phrases it so aptly: whenever someone is less than they could be, it is a tragedy. In describing one of his patients, who, just like Kläri Glauber, seemed “remarkably content with her impotence,” he regretfully concludes: “. . . I think she was one of the saddest people I have ever met.”⁴⁴ Glauber’s is a sadness, an impotence, an impoverishment of the human spirit aided and abetted by her employer, Dr. Fritz Emmenberger. It is in his interest that she remains exactly as she is. Though blissfully, and all the more poignantly, seemingly unaware of her ignorance, Kläri Glauber by word and deed joins that ignominious category of Emmenberger’s Sonnenstein staff, who functions as his appendage as surely as Marlok, the dwarf and the deaf-mute do, and who are consequently both victim and victimizer. Presumably the support staff of Emmenberger’s hospital exceeds those introduced in the course of the novel; nevertheless, it is evident that Emmenberger elected to surround the retired policeman exclusively with those who would jeopardize

even further his already precarious situation. The metaphorical noose around the critically ill and thoroughly shaken inspector's neck has never seemed smaller. And he knows it. He also now realizes unequivocally that all appearances notwithstanding, it is none other than Emmenberger who is and always did draw the noose ever tighter. He is and always was in control.

The Swiss physician does not delay his attempts to weaken, if not destroy, the police inspector, until he enters his intended victim's room in one of the novel's final scenes (236), but they ensue mere moments upon their first conversation. Bärlach characterizes the projected exchange somewhat differently, however, when he promises Hungertobel: "Emmenberger will examine me and I shall interrogate him." (198) A man of his word, he follows through on his intent and cross-examines the alleged war criminal immediately upon arrival in the clinic. Emmenberger retaliates just as swiftly. Days after the fact, Bärlach would conclude: ". . . Emmenberger knew who was pursuing him and had delivered a counterblow." (227)

Whether the physician initiates Bärlach's insulin treatments (215) with the two supposed tranquilizers, (207) or whether his comatose state can be attributed solely to a series of insulin injections (209), the fact remains that Bärlach loses consciousness shortly after entering the clinic the evening of 31 December and does not regain it permanently until the morning of 5 January.⁴⁵ "It's the fifth of January," gasped the detective despairingly, who now understood why he had not registered the New Year's bells, the entire horrible night just past." (214-215) Though at the time repeated insulin injections constituted a legitimate course of treatment, why should Emmenberger nevertheless be reprimanded for ordering their administration?

The reasons are many.

1. In the forties and fifties, in fact as early as 1933, insulin shock treatments were indeed used to alleviate certain pathological symptoms, but it was those related to schizophrenia.⁴⁶ (Current medical practice favours a variety of antipsychotic medications to manage this essentially non-curable, grave mental disorder. These drugs are designed to block the brain's dopamine receptors. If these avenues are largely ineffective or poorly tolerated, then and only then can electroconvulsive therapy be introduced.)⁴⁷ Even in extremely stressful situations, which could easily unnerve a lesser individual, Bärlach reacts with an enviable lucidity, a remarkable mental tenacity. If, as someone once noted, the sign of a well-integrated, a sane person is grace under pressure, then Bärlach is indeed sane.

2. Kalinowsky and Hoch, in their study concerning shock treatments in psychiatry, state that "patients suffering from a cardiovascular disease" head the list of those, who should not be treated with insulin.⁴⁸ Both tachycardia and brachycardia, potentially fatal arrhythmias, may already occur during the initial shock phase.⁴⁹ Though Bärlach had been scheduled to

undergo an operation for stomach cancer in early November, the surgery had to be postponed for two weeks. A heart attack pre-empted the surgical intervention. (123) Afflicted with both a serious heart condition and a malignancy, the retired policeman clearly does not meet the criteria established for those schizophrenics appropriately treated with insulin shock therapy. Kalinowsky and Hoch state: “. . .[e]very patient in reasonably good health is suitable for treatment.”⁵⁰ Even apart from the fact, that he is not a schizophrenic, he obviously does not make a suitable candidate.

3. Prior to any medical procedure, the consent of the patient and, if that is not possible, the approval of those responsible for the patient should be obtained. The results as well as the possible side effects of any projected treatment should, within reason, also be elucidated.⁵¹ Had Emmenberger made any effort to explain his intentions, upon reawakening, Bärlach would not have had such difficulty reorienting himself in time and space. Though he lapsed into a coma for at least four days, he thinks he has slept “around three hours.” (208) Slowly he takes the measure of his room, notices that he now wears bedclothes (208), denies ever receiving any injections (209), and promptly relapses into a coma. “Then it seemed to him as if he were sinking into some vast ocean, into some darkness or other.” (212) Next morning, on 5 January as noted earlier, he finally awakens from his medically induced sleep and laboriously begins to piece together what must have happened to him. “For a long time he stared into the dawning light, into these dispersing, green-grey shadows, until he understood: The window was barred.” (213) When at last he comprehends that he has not lost a few hours, but rather a few days, he abandons his composure for the first time and his frustration bursts forth despite the overwhelming fatigue. “He screamed: ‘What did you do to me?’ and attempted to raise himself, but fell feebly back onto his bed.” (215)

It is reprehensible that Emmenberger equated Bärlach with the mentally ill, that he deliberately ignored his daunting health issues, that he did not ask for his consent prior to treatment. But then these were contraindicated only from Bärlach’s viewpoint; all three did serve Emmenberger’s diabolical purposes perfectly. It is equally unconscionable - and yet again understandable from Emmenberger’s perspective - that he neglected to order the pre-treatment physical and psychiatric examinations,⁵² that he did not ascertain whether Bärlach had an allergy to insulin, that the treatment was begun in the evening, rather than in the morning,⁵³ that, contrary to standard medical practice,⁵⁴ his room exuded an air of foreboding. “The room was more threatening than ever.” (213) As unforgivable as these are, one failure eclipses them all. Bärlach was forced to remain in an induced sleep far too long. For far too long, his “will, comprehension, emotions and awareness of any internal or external stimulus” could not be aroused.⁵⁵

Whether the intermittent state of impaired consciousness can be described as a pre-coma, half-coma, superficial or deep coma does not mitigate the perpetrator's guilt. Whether some therapists are more skilled than others when administering insulin, whether some patients can tolerate longer periods of unconsciousness than others makes no difference either. The patient's welfare demands that "... the deep coma level should be kept for a maximum of one-half-hour only because the limit of the safety margin may be reached at this point, and if overstepped, irreversible coma results."⁵⁶ In other words, given that Bärlach's so-called treatment lasted days, and not the customary four or five hours,⁵⁷ he might never have awakened. Healing had never been on this physician's agenda.

And when Emmenberger finally does enter the elderly man's room, he minces no words in overtly stating his intent. "At seven I will operate on you." (238) The physician confirms what the policeman assumes. "You intend to operate on me without the benefit of anaesthesia," whispered the old man." (238) The murderer steps forward to pursue his usually fatal handiwork in his own name. "You, superintendent, I will have to handle myself." (239) Marlok, the dwarf, the deaf-mute, Kläri Glauber, the artificially induced hypoglycaemia, all these means have been set aside. The victims named earlier have also yielded their places. No longer does he focus his malevolent intentions upon Edith Marlok, the dwarf, Fortschig, the deaf-mute, nurse Glauber and Dr. Hungertobel. Emmenberger faces Bärlach alone.

It is not coincidental that Emmenberger waits until the novel's penultimate chapter to pursue Bärlach without benefit of proxy. For two reasons.

1. From a strictly literary viewpoint, this eleventh-hour confrontation between the two protagonists serves as the climax to the detective novel's plot and as such contributes markedly to its inherent suspense. With merciless eloquence and knife-like precision, the *Höllenfürst*, as Marlok calls her physician-lover, underscores the particulars of the situation.

"Both of us are scholars with opposing goals, chess players, sitting at the same game board. You made your move, now it's my turn. But our match has *one* outstanding quality: Either one of us will lose or both of us will lose. You have already lost; now I am curious, whether I must lose as well."
(241)

Towards the conclusion of their rather one-sided dialogue, Emmenberger states it once more. "You found me and I found you." (254)

2. In order for an exorcism to be successful, at some point the devil must show itself for what it is. It can no longer be allowed to disguise itself, can no longer “appear to be one and the same person and personality with its victim.”⁵⁸ No matter how long it takes - and sometimes it takes days - no matter how supremely difficult it may be, it is crucial the exorcist “break that *Pretense*.”⁵⁹ The exorcist must “force the spirit to reveal itself openly as separate from the possessed - and to name itself, for all possessing spirits are called by a name. . . .”⁶⁰ The price to be paid for dismantling this lie is high, extremely high,⁶¹ but unless the exorcist can force a clash between his will and the devil, the exorcism cannot proceed. “The *Clash* is the heart of a special and dreadful communication, the nucleus of this singular battle of wills between exorcist and Evil Spirit. Painful as it will be for him, the priest must look for the *Clash*. He must provoke it. If he cannot lock wills with the evil thing and force that thing to lock its will in opposition to his own, then again the exorcist is defeated.”⁶² Emmenberger is finally speaking to Bärlach, directly, without benefit of intermediary. The pretence ceases; the prince of lies is seen for what it is; the clash begins.

These last insights do not mean to suggest that all evil individuals are possessed. They are not. But given the nature of Emmenberger, how can it be denied that he incorporated all we consider evil?

Before operating upon him, before obviously killing him, Emmenberger attempts to fill the policeman’s supposedly final hours with as much denigration, as much dread as possible. Physical decimation should follow mental decimation. With his every gesture, his every word, he increases the ailing man’s suffering, inch by relentless inch.

Although the physician’s choice of attire will also be discussed elsewhere, it should be noted that it is already Emmenberger’s appearance which communicates his perceived superiority vis-à-vis his patient. “He wasn’t in his lab coat . . . but rather his attire was dark, striped, with a white tie on a shirt of silver grey. . . .” (236) To emphasize the contrast even more between himself and the emaciated, seemingly vanquished and thoroughly frightened policeman, he has donned well-padded yellow leather gloves, “as if he were afraid to get dirty.” (236)⁶³

Upon closing the door to Bärlach’s room, Emmenberger bows before “the helpless, skeleton-like patient” (236) and then elects to sit down. Though standing would seem to be more threatening than sitting near him, even this seemingly innocuous choice serves as a vehicle of intimidation, for he does not sit in the conventional manner. “The physician sat down at the old man’s bed, turning the chair’s back rest toward the commissioner, so he could press his chest against the back rest and fold his arms on top of it.” (237) Though arising once for a brief period, he resumes that identical position (238) and retains it for almost the entire duration of the exchange; he

remains sitting from approximately a few minutes before ten-thirty until three minutes before noon. (253) The physician leaves the room after twelve, but definitely prior to twelve-thirty. (253, 256) While discussing the evidence against him, Emmenberger deliberately intensifies his threatening demeanour by resting his chin on his crossed arms. (243) It is more than a fleeting gesture. He assumes this position two minutes after eleven and maintains it for almost a quarter of an hour. This posture allows this nihilist incarnate to intensify his gaze, to stare at his victim, while asking the cardinal question which forms the focal point of his conversation with Bärlach: "In what do you believe, commissioner?" asked the physician, without altering his position, and he looked at the old man with great curiosity and rapt attention." (247) Wholly dissatisfied with the police inspector's verbal as well as non-verbal responses to his relentless goading, Emmenberger finally abandons the chair and alights on the operating table. The time is three minutes to twelve. (253) His body language speaks volumes: if my arguments have failed to persuade you, surely the planned operation will succeed. Bärlach utters only two more words in Emmenberger's presence. "'Seven hours,' Bärlach's whisper, almost inaudible, issued from his sick bed." (253) Inordinately frustrated by the policeman's sustained silence, Emmenberger "braces himself with both hands on the operating table." (253) He finally leaves the operating table what must be a few minutes after twelve noon and approaches the elderly man. "'Perhaps this belief is too difficult,' said Emmenberger, for Bärlach continued to remain silent and he moved toward the old man's bed." (254) Perhaps this manner of intimidation will achieve the results all others have failed to achieve, and he will at last obtain a verbal response. Even Emmenberger's screams do not elicit a single syllable. "Emmenberger's voice sounded . . . like trumpet blasts, which penetrate the endlessly grey firmament." (255)

But his manner of sitting and standing, his screams were not the only weapons in Emmenberger's arsenal. At regular intervals throughout the entire confrontation, the physician laughs. He does so on six occasions. What would provoke his laughter in a situation, which, by anyone's reckoning, does not evoke the light-hearted or the inherently humorous?

The first two times Emmenberger laughs as if to convey: you can't be serious about your assumptions, surely you jest, my pitiful opponent. With his feigned disbelief, he endeavours to communicate a sense of his own superiority and simultaneously the policeman's inferiority. "'What do you want from me?' asked the commissioner. Emmenberger laughed. 'I should be the one asking: What do you want from me.'" (237) And again: "The physician laughed. 'You maintain that you became ill, in order to seek me out here at the Sonnenstein?'" (240) These examples reflect the laughter of derision. Laughter can be used to devalue, to ridicule, to unsettle, to gain or

maintain the upper hand. Or as Bergson surmised: "Above all else, laughter serves as a reprimand. Meant to humiliate, it is designed to have upon the person who is its object a painfully awkward effect."⁶⁴ And he continues: laughter can be understood as a kind of revenge for unwarranted liberties taken by the person who is the object of the laughter.⁶⁵ In Emmenberger's eyes, Bärlach had long ago gone many a step too far.

The remaining four instances (241, 249, 250) all mirror the laughter of teasing, the laughter of play. According to Helmuth Plessner's classic study, teasing and play share several essential characteristics. Both those who tease and those who play savour the inherent ambivalence of the pleasurable and the unpleasurable aspects of a given situation and frequently react by laughing. "In this interplay between attraction and revulsion, this back and forth between desire and indifference, which represents a consistent to and fro, therein lies the essence of teasing. . . ."⁶⁶ Plessner describes the particulars of play using similar concepts.

But this attraction for the ambivalence inherent in play, this lack of equilibrium, which is actually not an equilibrium, a submersion into a world, which finds its source in us and yet does not, which has a mind of its own and which we control nonetheless - that aspect cannot be overlooked. It is precisely this undeniable love, this attraction for all that is multi-faceted, which cannot be reconciled with the inherent either-or of reality. That is what we laugh about. . . .⁶⁷

To Emmenberger, this exchange of point, counterpoint with the adversary he had for so long underestimated bears all the hallmarks of a most fantastic, a most fascinating game. He simply delights in teasing Bärlach, in playing with him, and shows his delight by laughing.

"You have already lost the match, now I am curious, whether I must lose as well."

"You will also lose," said Bärlach quietly.

Emmenberger laughed. "That's possible. I would be a bad chess player, if I did not calculate that possibility into my equation." (241)

A few moments later, he remarks yet again upon the pleasure he derives from this challenging duel. "The physician laughed again. . . . 'I'll admit, that it amuses me, to see myself squirming like a fly in your web, while you simultaneously hang in mine.'" (241-242)

In both these instances, Emmenberger fully acknowledges that though he expects to win, he might also lose this wager. It is precisely this element of danger which attracts him over and over again. "Whoever takes a risk because he wishes to savour its thrill to the fullest seeks the ambivalence inherent in teasing. Whoever loves the equivocation of what cannot be pinned down, cannot be captured, he is captivated by the attraction of teasing."⁶⁸ Given the physician's flagrantly dubious and illegal choices, it is as if Helmuth Plessner had Emmenberger in mind when crafting these observations.

While it is understandable that laughter can and frequently does accompany moments of teasing as well as moments of play, it is nevertheless incomprehensible (for anyone normal) why Emmenberger would regard this verbal exchange as an inconsequential pastime, as a game? After all he has stated repeatedly that it may well culminate in Bärlach's death and/or his own. The answer is simple. The Swiss physician loves the perverse, he gleans pleasure from the infliction of pain.

Even if that pain is directed toward himself, does he deem it pleasurable, even amusing. In the final sentences he addresses to Bärlach hoping to goad him into an answer, he confirms this perverted outlook yet again. "Nothing will amuse me more than to observe my own descent into hell." (255)

Apparently he has harboured this abnormal attitude for an extended period of time. On one of his visits to his old friend's bedside, Dr. Hans Hungertobel recalls an incident from his days in medical school. He concedes that Emmenberger's tracheotomy did save the life of a fellow student and though more than forty years have passed since that alpine afternoon, the elderly physician cannot forget the look in Emmenberger's eyes; "all of a sudden something diabolic broke out of those eyes, an overwhelming pleasure in inflicting pain. . . ." (144)⁶⁹

When Emmenberger laughs not once, but two, three, four and even more times, Bärlach's response signals his recognition of the physician's perverse, of his diabolical nature. "The physician laughed yet again. This seemed to amuse him, the old man concluded somewhat astonished. More and more the physician struck him as odd." (241-242) In other words, Emmenberger's behaviour strikes the policeman as astonishing, as eccentric, as ill timed. How insightful it is for Bärlach to react in this manner!

In the previously cited landmark volume *People of the Lie*, Scott Peck observes: "When confronted by evil, the wisest and most secure adult will usually experience confusion."⁷⁰ When describing a former patient, whom he later diagnosed as evil, Peck also notes:

Another patient, a quite perceptive and intelligent woman, began one session by asking, "You know that lady who always comes to see you before me?"

I nodded. She was referring to Charlene.

"Well, she gives me the willies. I don't know why - I've never even talked to her. She just comes into the waiting room, gets her coat, and leaves. She's never said a word to me, but she gives me the willies."⁷¹

And when the physician's callous laughter ceases and the dialogue between the two enemies reaches its crescendo, Emmenberger claps. Not once but several times. He claps to underscore his words; Bärlach's performance is progressing on cue. It should be recalled that at this juncture, Emmenberger is still sitting on the chair, his chest facing the backrest. The supposedly inferior individual is doing just what the self-proclaimed superior individual intended him to do.

"I understand," called out the commissioner, in the foetal position, a dying animal, lying on his white sheet as if at the edge of an infinitely indifferent roadway. "You believe in nothing, but the right to torture people!"

"Bravo," answered the physician and clapped his hands. "Bravo!" That's what I call a good student, who dares to articulate the principle according to which I live. Bravo. Bravo." (Again and again he clapped his hands.) (252)

Clearly these inaudible as well as audible measures are meant to discourage; the sartorial selection, the body position as well as the raised voice, the laughter and clapping are all designed to intimidate. Despite the proliferation of these measures, they don't immediately achieve the desired results. Though doubtlessly feeling the effects of his continual physical deterioration, for the most part the seasoned police inspector remains collected, even defiant and relentlessly unerring in the logic of his thought. However, like many evil persons, Emmenberger is neither lazy⁷² nor a fool,⁷³ and consequently he devises a scheme, which eventually forces the terminally ill man to his knees. Quite literally. Shortly after entering the room and sitting down for the first time, the physician arises and presses some button, some lever:

. . . consequently the wall with the dancing men and women opened silently like a folding door. Behind it, a large room with glass cabinets became visible, which held surgical

instruments, gleaming knives and scissors in metal containers, cotton balls, hypodermic needles in cloudy liquids, bottles and a thin red surgical mask made of leather; everything was meticulously arranged. In the middle of the now widened room stood an operating table. Simultaneously slowly and threateningly a heavy metal shade was lowered over the window from above. All of a sudden the room lit up, because affixed to the ceiling between the seams of the mirrors there were fluorescent lights, which the old man only now noticed. (237-238)

And as if that entire display were not daunting enough, the elderly detective also notices in the bluish light above the cabinets: a large clock. (238)⁷⁴ This over-sized orb, its incessant ticking, its hands, mercilessly meting out Bärlach's dwindling hours, receives no less than forty mentions, while Emmenberger delineates in excruciating detail the principles by which he lives (or more accurately dies) and attempts to elicit an analogous credo from his adversary. (238-255) As these last moments become fewer and death would seem to approach ever closer, the clock moves metaphorically closer to the embattled figure on the bed. At first, Bärlach merely sees it and acknowledges its time-keeping role (238). Then he glances at it without wanting to do so (239); inevitably he begins to hear its ticking and voices the wish that it would simply disappear. "The clock, if it weren't for the clock." (241) Despite his thoroughly weakened condition, Bärlach's attitude reflects an astonishing variety of emotions, while in the clock's and the hospital director's presence. Until he falls silent long before Emmenberger exits the room, the seemingly vanquished policeman's responses testify to his suspicion of his enemy, his tenacity, his unerring powers of reasoning, his outrage. Even though it costs him extraordinary effort, he even twice screams at the physician. The first time Emmenberger's treatment of Fortschig arouses his anger, the second time Hungertobel's planned demise does so. (246) However more often than not, when he becomes aware or is made aware of the timepiece over and over again, he either whispers (238, 247, 253) or feels resigned and exhausted (241, 247). At one juncture he can no longer suppress his clock-induced fear. "I understand," answered the commissioner, who tried to suppress his fear, which grew ever stronger, ever more threatening, as the hands of the clock kept moving. . . ." (250) Yet again Emmenberger reminds him of the advancing hour; "It is five minutes to eleven-thirty'. . . ." The response is only too understandable. "How kind of you to remind me," groaned the old man, trembling with rage and frustration." (250)

However, after Emmenberger leaves between noon and twelve-thirty, the clock becomes one with the condemned old man. He seems engulfed by the blue of the room, "in which only the round orb of the clock continued to tick, as if it were one with the old man's heart." (256) Though he did once attempt to rise during his confrontation with Emmenberger, (246) for the remainder thereof, Bärlach retains a supine position. And for a few hours following Emmenberger's departure, nothing changes in this regard. "Thus Bärlach lay there and waited for death." (256) "It became three, it became four . . . no footsteps reached the old man, who just lay there on a metal bed, who didn't move, his body barely moving up and down." (256-257) At six minutes after five, he raises his upper torso and rings for assistance. At five-thirty he laboriously turns in bed. "Then he fell. For a long time he remained lying in front of the bed . . . and above him, somewhere above the glass cabinets the clock ticked away, the hands moved, it became thirteen to six, twelve to six, eleven to six." (257) Under his own power, he would not regain his bed. If the inability to rise at will is concomitant with humiliation, his humiliation is complete.⁷⁵ Using whatever strength still remains in his arms, he crawls towards the door hoping to reach for the latch.⁷⁶ Even repeated attempts to grasp the latch end in failure.⁷⁷ He is forced to scratch on the door, reminiscent of an animal. "Then he lay motionless again, finally pulling himself into the room again; he lifted his head, looked at the clock. Ten after six." (257) The fact that he thinks he has only fifty minutes left weighs heavily.

So he lay there, in front of the operating table and waited.
The room, the cabinets . . . the clock, they all surrounded
him, again and again the clock . . . nineteen to seven. Time
passed, continued to pass. . . . Ten to seven. (257-258)

With only ten minutes left, the police inspector sits up as best he can, the operating table supporting his back. The clock is behind him, the door through which his killer will enter stands squarely within his field of vision. It is no longer necessary for him to see the clock. The image of the unappeasable, the relentless timepiece permeates all he acknowledges, all that hears and feels. He visualizes for instance that Emmenberger will murder him "slowly and precisely like a clock." (258) Soon the ticking and its ominous meaning are synonymous with the frightened man's quintessential timekeeper, with man's quintessential timekeeper; "now he counted the seconds, which were at one with the beats of heart. . . ." (258) A few more seconds pass and the fatal clock suffuses his entire being. "Thus he counted, his white, bloodless lips babbling . . . a living clock. . . ." (258)

His demeaning, his threatening gestures, the fearsome and formidable array of medical hardware culminating in the infernal clock, with all of these Emmenberger intended to weaken, if not destroy Bärlach. But he also endeavours to annihilate Bärlach's spirit with his carefully chosen words. As mentioned earlier, he states his murderous intent without the slightest equivocation: "At seven I will kill you." (241) And he does so on more than one occasion (237, 238, 241, 250, 252, 254). Should perchance Bärlach's death at Emmenberger's hands be forestalled for one reason or another, the doctor doesn't fail to remind the policeman that cancer will kill him within the year. (241) He not only acknowledges murdering Nehle, whose trust he must have enjoyed in order for their collaboration to succeed (243-244), but also his role in the actualized and projected ruin of those closest to the policeman: Fortschig and Hungertobel (239, 246).

Bärlach realizes, as he never did before, the evil dimensions of the person confronting him. "He understood now that being rescued no longer constituted an option for him. Emmenberger had seen through him." (247) In the face of his utter hopelessness, his only response is a simple philosophical observation. "'You are a nihilist,' he said quietly. . . ." (247) That conclusion calls forth in Emmenberger his final and simultaneously his most devastating verbal volley. He presents the stricken policeman with an offer, albeit a double-edged one. "'In what do you believe, commissioner?' asked the physician . . ." (247), as he commences what he expects will be the elderly man's final dismantling. If Bärlach answers, states his beliefs, his motivations - and the physician suggests some possibilities to him - Emmenberger will set him free. Needless to say, the last would mean Emmenberger's death. (253) And as if Bärlach hadn't quite heard or didn't properly understand, the diabolical physician, while damning himself, restates his condition. "'But I am making - therein lies my wickedness - your release contingent on a lousy joke, a condition any child could fulfil, that you show me a belief system of equal value to my own.'" (255)

Evil, indeed. Who is he to set the terms of release for someone whom he should never have held against his will? Who is he to determine whether another's beliefs attain the measure of his own? And furthermore how would that criterion be determined? Who is he to inflict even more psychic pain on someone who already suffers from a terminal illness? How desperate Bärlach must have felt! How besieged! How torn! Undoubtedly he remembered that Emmenberger had set Gulliver free, when the latter had met the requirements for his release (162). Would the physician keep his word in this instance as well? What manner of credo would Emmenberger deem adequate? These questions must have entered the policeman's mind, despite his undeniable physical and mental exhaustion, despite the fact that, above all else, he wished to escape with his life one last time. Or as Edith Marlok had

said so tactlessly: “Every method to save yourself is good. Now you are also trying every which way possible to secure your release from Sonnenstein.” (217)

With a multi-faceted affront of deed and word, Emmenberger has attempted to ruin Bärlach. Even his departure from the policeman’s proximity does not signal the end of Emmenberger’s maltreatment. On the contrary. As was mentioned previously, the clock, its relentless reminder of encroaching death, as well as all the other frightening accoutrements, remain to torture Bärlach for a considerable length of time before the ominous orb metes out the final seconds prior to seven. (258) One factor received only marginal attention in the earlier discussion of the clock’s ignominious role, and it added significant anguish to what the policeman thought would be his terminal hours. From some time after twelve noon (256) until Gulliver bursts through the door at seven (258), Bärlach is alone. And he senses his involuntary isolation most keenly.

No noise, no groan, no talking, no shouting, no footsteps
reached the old man. . . . No longer did an exterior world
exist, no planet, which circled round, no sun and no city.
(256-257)

Enforced solitude “is generally perceived as a harsh penalty, and when solitary confinement is accompanied by threats, uncertainty. . . , the victim may suffer disruption of normal mental function without being able to muster any compensatory reintegration.”⁷⁸ Numerous studies have shown that though originally intended as a corrective mechanism of the penal system, solitary confinement came to be recognized as both ineffectual and inordinately punitive.⁷⁹ Furthermore, its negative effects were legion: extreme irritability, insomnia, memory loss, repeated suicide attempts, self-mutilation, fear of madness, depression. “Many prisoners find that *uncertainty* is the worst torment which they experience.”⁸⁰ Bärlach knows he is alone and helpless in an unequivocally hostile environment. How easy it is to understand why it takes him more than a few minutes to formulate even a whispered response to Gulliver’s wholly unexpected ministrations!

And he lifted the old man, holding him to the Jew’s chest
like a child and returned him to his bed.
“Done in,” he laughed, as the commissioner still could not
utter a word, but just lay there white as a corpse and from
his tattered caftan he pulled a bottle and two glasses. . . .

He held the glass to his lips and Bärlach drank. It did him a world of good, even if he thought that this ran counter to sound medical practice.
 “Gulliver,” he whispered and reached tentatively for his hand. “How could you know that I was in such an accursed mouse trap?” (259-260)

This final punishment should not have surprised Bärlach. Emmenberger had promised to leave him to his own devices, shortly after initiating their exchange. He even seemed to be fulfilling his victim’s implied request. ““But now we still have to discuss something with each other. . . . We cannot avoid it, and then I won’t bother you any longer. During one’s last hours one prefers to be alone, they say. That’s fine.”” (238) Truly Emmenberger did not leave a stone unturned. Or as Scott Peck phrases it: evil persons expend extraordinary effort in exercising their will to the detriment of those in their ken. “They are men and women of obviously strong will, determined to have their own way. There is a remarkable power in the manner in which they control others.”⁸¹

Notes

1. Charles Lichtenhaeler, *Der Eid des Hippokrates: Ursprung und Bedeutung*, vol. 12, Hippokratische Studie, Deutscher Ärzte-Verlag, Köln, 1984, pp. 265-277.
2. Ibid., p. 113.
3. Ibid., p. 183.
4. Ibid., p. 133. Another treatise concerning the Hippocratic Oath was published at a time when particularly German physicians needed a reminder of their time-honoured obligations: Franz Büchner, *Der Eid des Hippokrates: Die Grundgesetze der ärztlichen Ethik*, Herder, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1945. The pages just mentioned are the printed version of a lecture given at the University of Freiburg on 18 November 1941.
5. The camp at Stutthof was made as formidable as possible. In her definitive study Janina Grabowska describes the selected site in exhaustive detail. “The venue, which the Nazis selected for the camp at Stutthof, suited their felonious designs. The camp was situated just where a sliver of land jutted out into the bay of the Vistula River, due west of the village of Stutthof (Sztutowo), at the road which connects Danzig with this village. . . . On all sides the entire compound was surrounded by water. . . . The barriers created by the presence of the water and the utter lack of assistance from

anyone living nearby made escaping from Stutthof virtually impossible.” (11) In addition, the prevailing climatic conditions - for obvious reasons, it was frequently cold and wet - only exacerbated the lives of the malnourished prisoners. On 2 September 1939, the first prisoners were brought to Stutthof from Danzig. Then known as a SS-Sonderlager, this camp was not officially declared a *Konzentrationslager* until early 1941 or 1942. (Weinmann, 266, 744) Whatever the designation, the initial set of prisoners consisted primarily of Polish nationals: intellectuals, political functionaries and activists as well as priests. By the second half of September approximately four hundred individuals found themselves incarcerated there. (12) Some five years hence in September 1944, the number reached 93,000. (Weinmann, 266) The last roll call took place on 27 April 1945. Sources vary as to how many prisoners had survived to that point. Grabowska claims there were slightly more than a thousand (69); Weinmann suggests the number could have reached twenty-five thousand. (266) Most were evacuated in a disastrous and deliberately bungled sea operation, which only exacerbated the misery and consequently the loss of life. On 10 May the Swedish Red Cross assumed responsibility for the steam ship *Rheinfels*; of the over 1,400 prisoners aboard, about seven hundred came from Stutthof. “After the last convoy had left Stutthof, the camp ceased to operate. About one- to two-hundred prisoners remained behind, who were not evacuated.” (69) In the approximately five-and-a-half years that the camp was operational, the final death toll could easily have exceeded 65,000. (Weinmann, 266)

Janina Grabowska, *K.L. Stutthof: Ein historischer Abriss*, Hermann Kuhn (ed), Leon Lendzion (trans), Edition Temmen, Bremen, [1993]; *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem: (CCP)*, Martin Weinmann (ed), 2nd edn., Zweitausendeins, Frankfurt, 1990; Marek Orski, ‘Organisation und Ordnungsprinzipien des Lagers Stutthof,’ *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager: Entwicklung und Struktur*, vol. 1, Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth and Christoph Dieckmann (eds), Wallstein, Göttingen, 1998, pp. 285-308; Karin Orth, *Die Konzentrationslager-SS: Sozialstrukturelle Analysen und biographische Studien*, Wallstein, Göttingen, 2000, pp. 217-221, 278, 292-295; Karin Orth, *Das System der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager: Eine politische Organisationsgeschichte*, Hamburger Edition, Hamburg, 1999, pp. 69-76, 228-230, 282-287.

Eyewitness accounts of Stutthof can be found in: Stasys Yla, *A Priest in Stutthof: Human Experiences in the World of Subhuman*, Nola M. Zobarskas (trans), Manyland Books, New York, 1971; Eugen Kogon, *Der SS-Staat: Das System der deutschen Konzentrationslager*, 15th edn., Kindler, München, 1974; Wilhelm Heyne, München, 1985, p. 247.

Emmenberger forced Nehle to swallow a capsule filled with prussic acid. (244) Before he could be executed, the former *Reichsmarschall* Hermann Göring committed suicide by swallowing cyanide on October 15, 1946. Joe J. Heydecker and Johannes Leeb, *Der Nürnberger Prozeß*, Kiepenheuer, Köln, 1998, p. 488.

6. Without a doubt, the last words of this citation recall the first of the two Dürrenmatt novels which feature police inspector Hans Bärnach: *Der Richter und sein Henker*. Between 15 December 1950 and 31 March 1951, *der Schweizerische Beobachter* first published this narrative in instalments. Benzinger of Zurich, Einsiedeln and Cologne initially published the novel in its entirety in 1952. Friedrich Dürrenmatt, 'Der Richter und sein Henker: Ein Kriminalroman, 1950,' *Gesammelte Werke: Romane*, vol. 4, Diogenes, Zürich, 1991, pp. 9-117. All references to *Der Richter und sein Henker* followed by page numbers refer to the edition just cited.

7. It might be of interest to speculate why Friedrich Dürrenmatt selected this name for his protagonist's clinic. In his meticulously researched monograph, based upon his dissertation and presented to the University of Berlin's College of Medicine, Thomas Schilter traces the history of one of Germany's first notable mental hospitals. Founded in July 1811, the *Königliche-Sächsische Heil-und Verpflegungsanstalt Pirna-Sonnenstein* was, as its name would indicate, dedicated to the healing and care of its patients. (37) In April 1940 its mission changed radically. (68) That spring marked the beginning of a program, the expressed purpose of which was the liquidation not only of the mentally ill, but of all those deemed unfit to live, according to the stated policies of the National Socialist Party. (25) Thomas Schilter, *Unmenschliches Ermessen: Die nationalsozialistische "Euthanasie" - Tötungsanstalt Pirna - Sonnenstein 1940/41*, Stiftung Sächsische Gedenkstätten and Gustav Kiepenheuer, Leipzig, 1998.

For a detailed look at the earliest years of this institution and the comprehensive directives enacted to ensure the spiritual and physical welfare of the mentally ill, consult: G. A. E. Nostitz, *Beschreibung der Königl. Sächsischen Heil - und*

Verpflegungsanstalt Sonnenstein, 1. Theil, 2. Abtheilung, Verlag der Waltherßchen Buchhandlung, Dresden, 1829.

Other references to Sonnenstein can be found in the following texts: Ernst Klee, *“Euthanasie” im NS-Staat: Die “Vernichtung lebensunwerten Lebens,”* Fischer, Frankfurt, 1983, pp. 142, 150, 206; —, *Was sie taten - Was sie wurden: Ärzte, Juristen und andere Beteiligte am Kranken - oder Judenmord*, 1986, Fischer, Frankfurt, 1992, p. 99; Henry Friedlander, ‘The T4 Killers: Berlin, Lublin, San Sabba,’ *Die Normalität des Verbrechens: Bilanz und Perspektiven der Forschung zu den nationalsozialistischen Gewaltverbrechen*, Helge Grabitz et al (eds), Hentrich, Berlin, 1994, pp. 220-240.

As Emmenberger’s Sonnenstein is situated in the centre of Zurich on a wooded hill (193-195), scholars have suggested that it is identical with the clinic of Dr. Bircher-Benner, which he founded in 1897. Peter Spycher, *Friedrich Dürrenmatt: Das erzählerische Werk*, Huber, Frauenfeld, Stuttgart, 1972, p. 171. Bircher-Benner believed the correct diet could not only optimize health, but cure long-standing afflictions. He shares his philosophy, research methods and discoveries in his treatise: Max Bircher-Benner, *Vom Werden des neuen Arztes: Erkenntnisse und Bekenntnisse*, 4th edn., Hans Huber, Bern, Stuttgart, 1963. In 1949 Dürrenmatt was diagnosed with diabetes and thus he certainly could have been acquainted with this clinic. Heinrich Goertz, *Friedrich Dürrenmatt: Mit Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten*, Rowohlt, Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1987, p. 32.

8. M [organ] Scott Peck, *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1983, p. 107.
9. Though it is not my intention to trace the possible historical basis for Dürrenmatt’s novel, it may be of interest to note that, as unbelievable as it may seem, this additional perversion also found its reflection in the practices of war time Germany and its occupied territories. An eyewitness quoted one of the Mauthausen doctors as saying: “Jews do not survive here. I need two young healthy individuals for my surgical experiments. You have a choice, whether you volunteer for these experiments, or you will be killed with the others.” *SS im Einsatz: Eine Dokumentation über die Verbrechen der SS*, Komitee der Antifaschistischen Widerstandskämpfer in der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik (ed), Deutscher Militärverlag, Berlin, 1964, pp. 411, 412. Given the situation in which these so-called choices were made, death was a

foregone conclusion, regardless of the exact level of the victim's cooperation.

10. Jim Suhr, *The Choosing by Advantages Decisionmaking System*, Quorum, Westport, CT, London, 1999, p. 23.
11. Gulliver could be referring to the three-tiered system of concentration camps, which the *SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt* had devised. In his study *Der SS-Staat: Das System der deutschen Konzentrationslager*, Eugen Kogon suggests that drawing any meaningful conclusions from this system of categorization became a futile task. "All one could say is that matters grew worse whenever an assignment was made to an even lower category, and that for the individual the catastrophe was made even more horrific if the initial assignment was disadvantageous. Only a handful of prisoners were even aware that these distinctions were made at all. They only knew that it is 'better over here' and 'worse someplace else,' quite apart from any categorization." Eugen Kogon's *Der SS-Staat: Das System der deutschen Konzentrationslager*, 15th edn., Kindler, München, 1974; Wilhelm Heyne, München, 1985, pp. 64-65. By comparison, Kogon asserts that the history of the camp - when it was founded and made fully operational - was far more reflective of its conditions than its initial classification. (65)
In his exhaustive *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem*, Martin Weinmann maintains that the policy of terror was pursued in eleven different types of camps, prisons or ghettos. (715) Buchenwald, Dachau and Stutthof, which Gulliver mentions, all fell under the heading of concentration camps. (723, 724) Doubtlessly the category - extermination camps - to which Gulliver also refers did in fact exist. Though these were not as numerous as the concentration camps, nevertheless this rubric included such infamous places as Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka. (728) The documents of the International Tracing Service support Kogon's view that a system single-mindedly furthering human misery on such a horrific scale simply defies categorization. More information concerning the three extermination camps just named can be found in: Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indianapolis, IN, 1987.
12. For a discussion of the relationship between anxiety and fear, see: Paul Tillich, *The Courage to Be*, 2nd ed., 1952, Yale Nota Bene, New Haven, CN, London, 2000, pp. 36-39; Kenneth R. Hammond,

Judgments Under Stress, Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford, 2000, pp. 13, 14, 126.

13. Hammond, p. 125.
14. For illuminating insights concerning the crucial meaning of consent for human research subjects, see: Jay Katz, 'The Consent Principle of the Nuremberg Code: Its Significance Then and Now,' *The Nazi Doctors and the Nuremberg Code: Human Rights in Human Experimentation*, George J. Annas, Michael A. Grodin (eds), Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford, 1992, pp. 227-239.
15. Peck, p. 107.
16. Human experiments performed without the benefits of anaesthesia also had their historical precedent. Eugen Kogon in his *Der SS-Staat: Das System der deutschen Konzentrationslager* reports not only about such experiments: "anesthetizing the victim was never considered." (165) But he also documents the particulars of the relationship between Dr. Eisele and the Dutch Jew, Max Nebig. Dr. Eisele was reputed to be one of the cruellest SS physicians. "In most of the concentration camps, they [the SS-physicians] performed vivisection on prisoners - both ailing and healthy. . . . But in the camp at Buchenwald, the worst individual in this regard was doubtlessly *Dr. Eisele*. What he perpetrated between 1940 and 1943 exceeded by far the atrocities of the other SS-physicians." (164-165) Though the similarity with Emmenberger is difficult to overlook, the comparison to Gulliver and Eisele's victim, Nebig, becomes even more obvious, truly gives pause. Dr. Eisele subjected Max Nebig to a stomach resection, which he survived; subsequently he was scheduled to be transported from Buchenwald to Mauthausen. (165)

In his relatively recent volume, Ulrich Völklein cites an analogous case. Jenö Fried, a Hungarian Jew, survived a bone marrow transplant of the lower thigh at the hands of Dr. Mengele. Ulrich Völklein, 'Medezin-Verbrechen,' *Josef Mengele: Der Arzt von Auschwitz*, Steidl, Göttingen, 1999, pp. 171-172.

According to Janina Grabowska's exhaustive Stutthof study, no documentation could be found that human medical experiments were ever conducted in that camp. Nevertheless, she issues a caveat: "That does not however exclude the possibility that the concentration camp physician could have carried out experiments without official sanction. It is difficult to distinguish between a primitive 'treatment' contrary to all sound medical practice and a pseudo medical experiment." (45)

In his interpretive volume, concerning Dürrenmatt's Bärlach novels, Reinhard Kästler contends that the records of the

Nuremberg Trials established that such medical experimentation did in fact take place in Stutthof. He bases his claim upon the following citation from the 1957 edition of the *SS im Einsatz*: "Each time the experiments involved 100 victims. Usually these victims were Polish Jews. They were dispatched from Struthof at the behest of the physician overseeing the experiments. . . ." *SS im Einsatz: Eine Dokumentation über die Verbrechen der SS*, Komitee der Antifaschistischen Widerstandskämpfer in der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik (ed), 3rd edn., Kongress, Berlin, 1957, p. 349.

However, Struthof and Stutthof were not one and the same. Named after a nearby farmstead and located in Alsace, the KZ Struthof was also known as KZ Natzweiler.

Sources for the above include: Janina Grabowska, *K.L. Stutthof: Ein historischer Abriss*, Hermann Kuhn (ed), Leon Lendzion (trans), Edition Temmen, Bremen, [1993]; *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem: (CCP)*, Martin Weinmann (ed), 2nd edn., Zweitausendeins, Frankfurt, 1990, pp. 65, 740; Reinhard Kästler, *Erläuterungen zu Friedrich Dürrenmatt, Der Richter und sein Henker, Der Verdacht*, 4th edn., Königs Erläuterungen und Materialien, vol. 42, C. Bange, Hollfeld, 1998, pp. 93-94.

The following offer additional information concerning medical experimentation during the Nazi regime: *The Nazi Doctors and the Nuremberg Code: Human Rights in Human Experimentation*, George J. Annas, Michael A. Grodin (eds), Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford, 1992; Robert M.W. Kempner, *SS im Kreuzverhör: Die Elite, die Europa in Scherben schlug*, 2nd edn., Schriften der Hamburger Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts, vol. 4, Franz Greno, Nördlingen, 1987, pp. 110-111; Ernst Klee, *Auschwitz, die NS-Medizin und ihre Opfer*, Fischer, Frankfurt, 1997; —, *Was sie taten-Was sie wurden: Ärzte, Juristen und andere Beteiligte am Kranken-oder Judenmord*, 1986, Fischer, Frankfurt, 1992; Peter-Ferdinand Koch, *Menschenversuche: Die tödlichen Experimente deutscher Ärzte*, Piper, München, 1996; Johannes Tuchel, *Konzentrationslager: Organisationsgeschichte und Funktion der "Inspektion der Konzentrationslager" 1934-1938*, Schriften des Bundesarchivs, vol. 39, Harald Boldt, Boppard am Rhein, 1991, pp. 280-291; Ulrich Völklein, 'Medezin - Verbrechen,' *Josef Mengele: Der Arzt von Auschwitz*, Steidl, Göttingen, 1999, pp. 158-174.

17. Also known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, this contract was meant to assure the sovereignty of two European principals in regard

-
- to each other. "Each power agreed to refrain from any act of force, or aggressive act, or attack 'against each other or in conjunction with any other Powers.'" Though parts of the agreement were made public, others were not. Just how the country was to be divided between Germany and Russia in the event Germany invaded Poland remained secret. The differences between what was proposed and what transpired are well known. German troops marched into Poland on Friday, 1 September 1939 and proceeded into the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941. Martin Gilbert, *A History of the Twentieth Century: Volume Two 1933-1951*, William Morrow, New York, 1998, pp. 253-266, 378-381; Norman Davies, 'Nazi-Soviet Pact,' *The Oxford Companion to World War II*, I. C. B. Dear and M. R. D. Foot (eds), Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, 1995, pp. 780-782. See also: R. M. Douglas, *Orderly and Humane: The Expulsion of the Germans after the Second World War*, Yale University Press, New Haven, CN, London, 2012, pp. 41-43.
18. Falk Pingel, *Häftlinge unter SS-Herrschaft: Widerstand, Selbstbehauptung und Vernichtung im Konzentrationslager*, Hoffmann und Campe, Hamburg, 1978, pp. 119-122. Perspectives on the situation of women in the concentration camps can be found in: Gabriele Pfingsten and Claus Füllberg-Stolberg, 'Frauen in Konzentrationslagern - geschlechtsspezifische Bedingungen des Überlebens,' *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager: Entwicklung und Struktur*, Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth and Christoph Dieckmann (eds), vol. 2, Wallstein, Göttingen, 1998, pp. 911-938.
 19. Tuchel, p. 299; Pingel, pp. 51, 119. This statement can also be verified in: Joe J. Heydecker and Johannes Leeb, *Der Nürnberger Prozeß*, Kiepenheuer, Köln, 1998, p. 260.
 20. Viktor E. Frankl, *... trotzdem Ja zum Leben sagen: Ein Psychologe erlebt das Konzentrationslager*, 9th edn., 1982, DTV, München, 1990, p. 108.
 21. Dante Alighieri, 'The Divine Comedy: Inferno,' *The Portable Dante*, Mark Musa (trans and ed), Penguin, New York, 1995, p. 14.
 22. Frankl, p. 114.
 23. Ibid., pp. 120-121.
 24. Ibid., p. 80.
 25. For the "Vernichtung lebensunwerten Lebens," blame can be apportioned to Hitler's misappropriation of Darwin's theory of natural selection as expressed in *Mein Kampf*: "A stronger race will displace the weak, because the survival instinct in its ultimate form will always destroy the ludicrous shackles of a so-called humanity, which our weakness erected . . . in order to yield its place to

strength.” (145) Or fault can be found with Heinrich Himmler, the *Reichsführer* of the SS, and all those who carried out his wishes in a seemingly endless number of asylums, hospitals, sanatoriums and camps. Nevertheless, one fact remains. From the moment Adolf Hitler was named *Reichskanzler* on 30 January 1933, (34) and even beyond his suicide, as well as the cessation of hostilities in May 1945 (450-456), the definition of those deemed unfit to live and consequently sterilized, forced to abort their children or murdered changed incrementally, sometimes week by week, to include more and more individuals. At first the criminal element was targeted for extinction, but that included those who had never committed a crime. Just a few months after Hitler assumed power, on 14 July 1933, a law was enacted which demanded the sterilization - without their consent - of all those who could pass on hereditary diseases or conditions. To this catalogue, among others, belonged the mentally deficient, the mentally ill - the schizophrenic, the epileptic, the manic-depressive - whether they showed any signs of the ailment or not, as well as those with vision problems - including those suffering from night blindness - the hearing-impaired, and those born with hip dysplasia or showing any deformity whatsoever. In October 1933, vagrants, beggars and excessive drinkers, or those perceived as such, were added to the list. (36-39) Eventually that category included anyone considered undesirable to the regime for any reason, be that primarily a congenital defect, ethnic or religious background or an ideological choice.

The page references just cited refer to the following texts: Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, Zentralverlag der NSDAP, München, 1942; Ernst Klee, “*Euthanasie*” im NS-Staat: Die “*Vernichtung lebensunwerten Lebens*,” Fischer, Frankfurt, 1983.

Additional corroborating documentation can be found in: Bernhard Lösener and Friedrich Knost, *Die Nürnberger Gesetze: nebst den Durchführungsverordnungen und den sonstigen einschlägigen Vorschriften*, 3rd edn., Franz Vahlen, Berlin, 1939; Eugen Kogon, *Der SS-Staat: Das System der deutschen Konzentrationslager*, 15th edn., Kindler, München, 1974; Wilhelm Heyne, München, 1985, pp. 67-74; Volker Rieß, *Die Anfänge der Vernichtung “lebensunwerten Lebens” in den Reichsgauen Danzig-Westpreußen und Wartheland 1939/40*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt, 1995.

26. One of the most influential physicians not only to aid and abet, but in fact spearhead the murderous campaign launched against those considered ill or otherwise impaired was Dr. Werner Heyde. As a *Privatdozent* for psychiatry and neurology, he joined the National

Socialist Party in 1933, became a member of the SS three years later and thereby began his unrelenting participation in all aspects of the euthanasia program. He received his last promotion from *Obersturmbannführer* to *SS-Standartenführer* on 20 April 1945. About a month later, the British arrested him on Danish soil; almost two years subsequent, the Americans released him to the Germans, “as a warrant for his arrest had been issued by the provincial authorities (Frankfurt). . . .” (20) In April 1947 he is asked to testify at the Nuremberg trials. But enroute to Frankfurt, he escapes in Würzburg, a city with which he is thoroughly acquainted. “Twelve years will pass, before he is rearrested.” (20) His ability to live and work with impunity for so many years can at least partially be explained by the fact that he obtains falsified documents and passes himself off as Fritz Sawade. Though there are claims and counterclaims as to whether at certain junctures between 1947 and 1959 Heyde did in fact reveal his identity, records show that as of December 1949 he practiced sports medicine under the pseudonym Dr. Sawade. About a year later, he receives his first referral from Schleswig and is asked to render judgment on a case requiring his expertise “as a well versed neurological medical expert.” (21) From that point forward until late 1959, a wide variety of offices requested his professional services, despite incontrovertible evidence that innumerable highly placed individuals had known for years that Heyde and Sawade were one and the same. “The last attempt to help Heyde is thoroughly unsuccessful. The medical director of the euthanasia programs surrenders to the authorities in Frankfurt on 12 December 1959.” (29) Heyde commits suicide in his cell the morning of 13 February 1964. He leaves behind a nine-page letter, in which he repeatedly proclaims his innocence. These biographical details as well as others can be corroborated in: Ernst Klee, *Was sie taten-Was sie wurden: Ärzte, Juristen und andere Beteiligte am Kranken-oder Judenmord*, 1986, Fischer, Frankfurt, 1992, pp. 19-29, 42-50; Peter-Ferdinand Koch, *Menschenversuche: Die tödlichen Experimente deutscher Ärzte*, Piper, München, 1996, p. 44; *The Nazi Doctors and the Nuremberg Code: Human Rights in Human Experimentation*, George J. Annas, Michael A. Grodin (eds), Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford, 1992, p. 41; Robert Jay Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide*, Basic Books, New York, 1986, pp. 117-119; Klaus-Detlev Godau-Schüttke, ‘Die Heyde/Sawade-Affaire,’ *Die Normalität des Verbrechens: Bilanz und Perspektiven der*

Forschung zu den nationalsozialistischen Gewaltverbrechen, Helge Grabitz et al (eds), Hentrich, Berlin, 1994, pp. 444-479.

In addition to being assisted at crucial points by a myriad of sympathizers, Josef Mengele also assumed various identities in his escape from justice. For a short time, he was known as Fritz Hollman. During seven of his ten Argentinean years, from 1949 until 1956, he was in possession of a Red Cross passport issued by the Swiss Consulate and made out to Helmut Gregor, supposedly an engineer. On 27 November 1959, José Mengele became a citizen of Paraguay. In October 1960, he flees to Brazil, under the name of Peter Hochbichler. He assumes the identity of an Austrian, Wolfgang Gerhard, in the summer of 1971. Still known as Wolfgang Gerhard, Mengele drowns in the waters near Bertioga, Brazil in February 1979.

For more on this topic consult: Gerald L. Posner and John Ware, *Mengele: The Complete Story*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1986, pp. 86-132; Ulrich Völklein, 'Auf dem "Rattenweg" nach Südamerika,' 'Ruhige Jahre in Buenos Aires,' *Josef Mengele: Der Arzt von Auschwitz*, Steidl, Göttingen, 1999, pp. 225-262, 288, 301-302.

27. Peck, p. 178.
28. Ibid., p. 107.
29. Germany's unconditional surrender on all fronts was signed early on May 7, 1945. "The Second World War in Europe was over." Gilbert, p. 681.
30. Terry M. Parssinen, *Secret Passions, Secret Remedies: Narcotic Drugs in British Society 1820-1930*, Institute for the Study of Human Issues, Philadelphia, PA, 1983, p. 95. This statement echoes one made by Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr., Dean of the Harvard Medical School, in which he warned against the perils of these seductive pain-killing chemicals. "'A frightful endemic demoralization betrays itself in the frequency with which the haggard features and drooping shoulders of the opium drunkards are met with in the street.'" Charles F. Levinthal, *Messengers of Paradise: Opiates and the Brain*, Doubleday, New York, 1988, p. 21.
31. Gerald G. May, *The Awakened Heart: Living Beyond Addiction*, Harper, San Francisco, CA, 1991, p. 81.
32. In his *The Cry for Myth*, Rollo May cites a passage from Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus*. May's concern lies with the conversation between Adrian and the devil. And though in Rollo May's text Mann's quote serves a different purpose than it does here, it is

remarkable how often in the course of this dialogue, coldness, the absence of love and hell are brought into conjunction with one another. “Love is forbidden you insofar as it furnishes warmth. Your life shall be cold - therefore you may not love anyone. . . . An increasing coldness of your life and your relationship to others is part and parcel of the nature of things. . . . Is the cold not prefigured in you. . . ? We want you cold. . . .” Thomas Mann, *Doktor Faustus: Das Leben des deutschen Tonsetzers Adrian Leverkühn, erzählt von einem Freunde*, Fischer, Frankfurt, 1997, pp. 334-335; Rollo May, *The Cry for Myth*, Norton, New York, 1991, p. 259.

In the postscript to her volume on Albert Speer, Gitta Sereny makes the following observation. “Speer himself killed no one and felt no enmity, hatred or even dislike for the millions in Eastern Europe, Christians and Jews, who were systematically slaughtered: he felt nothing. There was a dimension missing in him, a capacity to feel which his childhood had blotted out, allowing him to experience not love but only romanticized substitutes for love. Pity, compassion, sympathy and empathy were not part of his emotional vocabulary.” Gitta Sereny, *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth*, 1995, Knopf, New York; Vintage, New York, 1996, p. 719.

33. Viktor E. Frankl, *The Doctor and the Soul: From Psychotherapy to Logotherapy*, Richard and Clara Winston (trans), Bantam, New York, 1969, pp. 106-107.
34. Erich Fromm, *The Art of Loving*, Harper, New York, 1956, p. 55. Albert Speer found Erich Fromm to be a “fascinating” conversationalist and his treatise - *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* - worthy of his consideration. Sereny, p. 689.
35. M[organ] Scott Peck, *The Road Less Traveled: A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1978, p. 81.
36. Morton Kelsey, *Reaching: The Journey to Fulfillment*, Harper, San Francisco, CA, 1989, pp. 97-98.
37. Martin Buber, *Ich und Du*, 11th edn., Lambert Schneider, Heidelberg, 1983, p. 22.
38. Rollo May, *Love and Will*, Delta, New York, 1989, p. 289.
39. *The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version*, Matthew 7: 17, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999.
40. The name of Bärlach’s ill-fated and pen-wielding associate is not accidental. Ulrich was the name of Friedrich Dürrenmatt’s paternal grandfather. Though he served as a *Berner Nationalrat*, his was quite the free spirit. A newspaper publisher, he wrote verses satirizing small-mindedness and an over-controlling bureaucracy.

Heinrich Goertz, *Friedrich Dürrenmatt: Mit Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten*, Rowohlt, Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1987, pp. 12-13.

In his *Interpretationshilfen*, concerning Friedrich Dürrenmatt's detective novels, Wolfgang Pasche theorizes that Edgar Allan Poe's 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue' does share some of its details with *Der Verdacht*. (104) The body of the younger of the two victims is discovered in a back room on the fourth floor. The room was locked "with the key inside" (537, 542) - much as Fortschig had been discovered in his fifth floor bathroom. "The door had to have been bolted from the inside. . . . The door does not have a keyhole and can only be locked by means of a heavy bolt." (235) Both narrators arrive at the erroneous conclusion that entry into the room via any other means would have been impossible. "Several witnesses, recalled, here testified that the chimneys of all the rooms on the fourth story were too narrow to admit the passage of a human being." (543) The newspaper article concerning Fortschig's death also laments this inaccessibility. "The light shaft, onto which the small bathroom window opens . . . is narrow, and it is impossible that any one could have climbed up or down from there. . . ." (235) Both the primate and the dwarf enter their respective venues through the window. (555, 239) Both stories also rely on that staple of detective fiction: the use of the blunt object. In Poe's narrative, Paul Dumas, the physician on the case, states: "A heavy club of wood, or a broad bar of iron - a chair - any large, heavy, and obtuse weapon would have produced the same results. . . ." (544) Police reports confirm that a hard object wielded from above caused Fortschig's death. (235) In neither instance do the police officially charged with solving the crime execute their mandate. All the clues leading to the large and ferocious ape as the perpetrator of the two murders in the Rue Morgue "escaped the police." (558) As regards Fortschig's demise, the results are equally dismal. "Just how the tragedy occurred is not clear. But a crime has to be ruled out. . . ." (235) That would seem to be the final judgment of the examining magistrate, Dr. Lucius Lutz. As Wolfgang Pasche correctly maintains, it is the analytical acumen of both Dupin and Bärlach which reveals the truth about the killings. (104)

Though by virtue of their size, the two principles represent polar opposites, the ape and the dwarf do share a remarkable number of characteristics. Both possess an undeniable rapidity of movement. Poe's Dupin reminds his friend again and again of the murderer's "almost preternatural character of that agility." (554, 555, 556) Emmenberger praises the dwarf's acrobatic ability, (239) and in the

novel's final scene, Gulliver repeatedly witnesses the same. "With a single powerful leap . . . the dwarf bounded forward onto the Jew's left shoulder." (261-264) In addition, the dwarf is repeatedly characterized using simian terms. Upon his arrival at the clinic, Bärlach notes: "The small hands and feet . . . grasped the bars just as a monkey would. . . ." (196) Emmenberger twice refers to him as "the small monkey" (239, 247) and Gulliver also calls him "'my little monkey.'" (261, 264) It is obvious that no one would expect an ape to speak. Yet frequent reference is made to the sounds the creature uttered. They were cacophonous and unintelligible. (550, 555, 558, 568) As mentioned elsewhere, the dwarf cannot speak either. (261, 264)

Edgar Allan Poe, 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue,' *Collected Works of Edgar Allan Poe: Tales and Sketches 1831-1842*, Thomas Ollive Mabbott (ed), 2nd rpt., Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1979, pp. 521-574.

41. Rembrandt's *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr Nicolaes Tulp* represents the first of his group portraits. The twenty-six year old artist (1606-1669), then coming into his own, signed and dated this commemorative rendering of the physician's second public anatomy lesson in 1632. Tulp himself, the ranking member of Amsterdam's Surgeons' Guild, commissioned the portrait and the lesson remained in the guild's possession for decades. Allowed to fall into deplorable condition, it wasn't until 1828 that King Willem I appropriated the painting for his personal collection and removed it to the Mauritshuis in The Hague. Subsequently the canvas underwent a series of restorations and to the present day forms a crucial part of the Mauritshuis collection.

Additional information about the significance and history of this painting can be found in: William S. Heckscher, *Rembrandt's Anatomy of Dr. Nicolaas Tulp: An Iconological Study*, New York University Press, New York, 1958; Norbert Middelkoop et al, *Rembrandt under the scalpel: The Anatomy Lesson of Dr Nicolaes Tulp Dissected*, Six Art Promotion, Amsterdam, 1998; Mariët Westermann, *Rembrandt*, Phaidon, London, 2000, pp. 79-82.

42. The first in a set of three engravings, *Ritter, Tod und Teufel*, measuring 10 by 7 inches, bears Albrecht Dürer's monogram and the date 1513. Adam von Bartsch refers to this engraving as: *Le cheval de la mort*. In his Netherlands diary, Dürer entitled this work simply as "der Reuter." According to some scholars, this engraving concludes his study of horses. In immediate preparation for its execution, the artist completed two pen and ink sketches featuring a

knight on his horse. As early as 1498, however, he had sketched a third pen-and-ink rendering of a mounted knight with a lance over his right shoulder.

Both Erwin Panofsky and Peter Strieder offer detailed interpretations of the engraving, which include the artistic, historical and theological sources. On a most elementary level, Dürer's creation can be understood as an allegory. A knight on horseback rides into battle, armed with "a Christian faith so virile, clear, serene and strong that the dangers and temptations of the world simply cease to be real. . . ." (Panofsky, vol. 1, p. 152) The rider notices neither the devil carrying a two-pronged pickaxe nor the decomposing figure of death holding an hourglass, as he progresses unwaveringly toward the city of God, represented by the castle in the far distance. Adam von Bartsch, *The Illustrated Bartsch 10: Sixteenth Century German Artists: Albrecht Dürer*, Walter L. Strauss (ed), Abaris Books, New York, 1980, p. 85; —, *Le Peintre graveur: Maîtres allemands*, vol. 7, B. de Graaf, Nieuwkoop, 1982, p. 52; Erwin Panofsky, *Albrecht Dürer*, vol. 1, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1948, pp. 151-156; —, *Albrecht Dürer*, vol. 2, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1948, p. 29, p. 207; Peter Strieder, *Dürer*, Karl Robert Langewiesche Nachfolger Hans Köster, Königstein im Taunus, 1981, pp. 174-180.

43. M[organ] Scott Peck, *What Return Can I Make? Dimensions of the Christian Experience*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1985, pp. 89-90.
44. Peck, *People of the Lie*, p. 178.
45. On 5 January 1921, Friedrich Dürrenmatt, their first child and only son, was born to the Rev. Reinhold Dürrenmatt and his wife, Hulda Zimmermann, in the village of Konolfingen, Canton Berne. Goertz, p. 12.
46. Lothar B. Kalinowsky and Paul H. Hoch, *Shock Treatments, Psychosurgery: And Other Somatic Treatments in Psychiatry*, 2nd edn., Grune & Stratton, New York, 1952, pp. 4, 6, 7, 11.
47. Daniel C. Javitt, 'Schizophrenia,' *Conn's Current Therapy: Latest approved methods of treatment for the practicing physician*, Robert E. Rakel and Edward T. Bope (eds), W. B. Saunders, Philadelphia, PA, 2001, pp. 1154-1157.
48. Kalinowsky, p. 10.
49. Ibid., p. 19.
50. Ibid., p. 10.
51. Ibid., p. 12.
52. Ibid., p. 11.

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53. Ibid., p. 14.
 54. Ibid., p. 8.
 55. Bruce H. Dobkin, *Brain Matters: Stories of a Neurologist and His Patients*, Crown, New York, 1986, p. 61.
 56. Kalinowsky, p. 21.
 57. Ibid., pp. 15-21.
 58. Malachi Martin, *Hostage to the Devil: The Possession and Exorcism of Five Living Americans*, Harper, New York, 1987, pp. 18, 234.
 59. Ibid., p. 18.
 60. Ibid., pp. 18, 235, 401.
 61. Ibid., p. 19.
 62. Ibid., p. 21.
 63. Ella Lingens, a physician in Auschwitz-Birkenau, testified that Josef Mengele frequently wore white gloves while making his rounds. Another physician mentioned: "He was always very debonair, very clean, perfumed," the contrast to the prisoners, who had to live in waste and filth, could not have been greater." Ernst Klee, *Auschwitz, die NS-Medizin und ihre Opfer*, Fischer, Frankfurt, 1997, p. 460.
 64. Henri Bergson, 'Le Rire: Essai sur la signification du comique,' *Oeuvres*, PUF, Paris, 1959, p. 481.
 65. Ibid.
 66. Helmuth Plessner, 'Lachen und Weinen. Eine Untersuchung der Grenzen menschlichen Verhaltens (1941),' *Gesammelte Schriften, VII, Ausdruck und menschliche Natur*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt, 1982, p. 281.
 67. Ibid., p. 289.
 68. Ibid., p. 281.
 69. Mengele's eyes also left an unforgettably negative impression. "His eyes made an odd impression and all of us were very afraid of him." Those are the words of one eyewitness. Another remarked: "he could not . . . look anyone in the eyes." Ernst Klee, *Auschwitz, die NS-Medizin und ihre Opfer*, p. 460.
 70. Peck, *People of the Lie*, p. 62.
 71. Ibid., p. 156.
 72. Ibid., p. 77.
 73. Ibid., p. 167.
 74. Wolfgang Pasche suggests in his *Interpretationshilfen* to Friedrich Dürrenmatt's detective fiction, that Edgar Allan Poe's 'The Pit and the Pendulum' may have inspired Dürrenmatt's use of the clock. (104) Both stories are unique masterpieces and no one would mistake one for the other, nevertheless at least some of the remarkable number of shared elements bear mentioning. Both the I-

narrator of Poe's tale and Hans Bärlach are held hostage in an enclosed space: the former in a prison cell, the latter in a hospital room, the window barred. Bärlach's deputy, Fortschig, is murdered in his bathroom; the door had been closed from within. Multiple features of both venues are deftly designed to instil extreme discomfort, even revulsion. To enhance this effect, the lighting alters markedly what both perceive within their limited purviews. "Demon eyes, of a wild and ghastly vivacity, glared upon me in a thousand directions, where none had been visible before. . . ." (695) Those are the observations of Poe's tormented man. Bärlach voices his reactions in similar manner: "'Now, sister,' he said, still astonished that the room had altered so significantly due to the lighting; before he had only noticed the curtain, and the dancing men and women, the Anatomy and the crucifix he had not noticed them at all; but now he was filled with anxiety, which this alien world induced in him. . . .'" (210) Both protagonists vacillate repeatedly between periods of sleep and wakefulness. Both attempt with only the greatest of efforts not only to ascertain the exact nature of their surroundings, but also to survive despite the dizzying odds. Both find themselves in a supine position. In their frenzied and fatigued states both stumble and fall. Both men shudder and tremble. Poe's victim utters "one loud, long, and final scream of despair." (697) Hans Bärlach promises to scream, if Emmenberger lays a hand on him. "'As I am a weak, old man, I shall scream, I am afraid,' continued Bärlach." (238) At every turn, hundreds of rats torment Poe's main character. Too exhausted to bang with his fist, Bärlach scratches at the door of his hospital room with his fingers and a single thought occupies his mind: "Like a rat, he thought." (257) Upon restoring the world to its customary order, Gulliver consoles his old friend in saying: "'To you (belong) the mice in Berne, to me the rats of Stutthof.'" (260) He thus equates Emmenberger with that most vile of vermin. If, as one critic maintains, Albert Camus' *La Peste* can be read as an allegory of the Third Reich, then to represent its encroaching horror as recurrent invasions of rats seems entirely appropriate. Contrary to their well-founded expectations, both men escape death through last minute and entirely unforeseen interventions. Edgar Allan Poe, 'The Pit and the Pendulum,' *Collected Works of Edgar Allan Poe: Tales and Sketches 1831-1842*, Thomas Ollive Mabbott (ed), 2nd rpt., Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1979, pp. 678-700.

75. A passage from André Gide's *L'Immoraliste* reverberates in the mind. ". . . I took a book lying on my table - the Bible - I allowed it

to open at random; leaning over it, I could read in the bright moonlight; I read these words Christ addressed to Peter, alas! these words, which I could never again forget: 'Now . . . you go where you wish; but when you are old, you will extend your hands...' You will extend your hands...." André Gide, 'L'Immoraliste,' *Oeuvres Complètes*, L[ouis] Martin-Chauffier (ed), vol. 4, NRF, Paris, 1933, p. 52.

76. There's no doubt that if Bärlach is to summon help in order to extricate himself from this trap, he must reach the door latch or *Falle*. The first words the unbelievably relieved Bärlach utters upon his rescue allude to this double meaning. "'Gulliver'. . . . 'How could you know that I am in this accursed mousetrap?'" (260) This is not the only time that Dürrenmatt delights in this play on words. He uses it with enviable success in his first detective novel, which also features Hans Bärlach: *Der Richter und sein Henker*. When arriving at the inspector's home for his initial visit, Tschanz looks for the doorbell, but failing to find it, he must use the latch instead. "After hesitating somewhat he pulled down on the latch, as in the dark he could not find a doorbell. The door was unlocked and Tschanz entered the foyer." (27-28) Bärlach leaves it unlocked, does not meet him at the door and pretends to be sleeping when the young policeman enters the library; all of these measures are designed to trap Tschanz into indicting himself as Schmied's murderer.
77. Bärlach reduced to moving laboriously on all fours, the policeman shares some characteristics of an animal. As Bärlach reaches for the door latch a third, a fifth time without success, invariably Gregor Samsa in Franz Kafka's *Die Verwandlung* comes to mind. "No matter the effort with which he threw himself onto his right side, he always swung onto his back again. He probably tried it a hundred times . . . and only ceased trying, when he began to feel a slight, dull ache in his side, he had never felt before." Franz Kafka, *Die Verwandlung*, 10th rpt., Suhrkamp, Frankfurt, 1993, p. 8.
78. Anthony Storr, *Solitude: A Return to the Self*, Ballantine, New York, 1988, p. 42. The entire chapter, titled 'Enforced Solitude,' deserves reading: pp. 42-61. Storr mentions examples in which non-voluntary isolation in both its usual as well as extended meanings engendered remarkable creativity. Even he, however, does not fail to acknowledge a caveat. "The human spirit is not indestructible; but a courageous few discover that, when in hell, they are granted a glimpse of heaven."

- 79. When prisoners are deprived only of sustained human contact, but are allowed the use of books, radios and similar items, mental function nevertheless deteriorates markedly. Ibid., p. 44.
- 80. Ibid., p. 46.
- 81. Peck, *People of the Lie*, p. 78.

Chapters Two and Three: Failure to Respect the Autonomy of Others and Their Depersonalization

And let the winds of the heavens dance between you.

Though the creation of victims, who in turn can and frequently do evolve into victimizers, constitutes the first and most compelling characteristic of those considered evil, this chapter will focus on the *second* and *third* characteristics.

The *second* characteristic follows logically from the first. The last section's final quote mentions the issue of control. This choice was not accidental. Those who persistently and repressively seek to influence others, fail to recognize their inherent autonomy, the obligatory separation between themselves and others. In other words, evil persons endeavour to curtail the free will of others, to thwart their development, their self-actualization. They attempt to do so not for the benefit of the other, but for their own. Any mother forcefully trying to dissuade her eight-year-old not to continue headlong toward a raging stream obviously intends to foster her child's welfare. Evil individuals, on the other hand, do not consider, let alone further, the legitimate needs or desires of those they choose to dominate.

Contradicting a prevalent assumption, Scott Peck describes one aspect of loving as follows: "... a major characteristic of genuine love is that the distinction between oneself and the other is always maintained and preserved."¹ He emphasizes this crucial requisite repeatedly. "The genuine lover always perceives the beloved as someone who has a totally separate identity. Moreover, the genuine lover always respects and even encourages this separateness and the unique individuality of the beloved."² Naturally Rainer Maria Rilke phrases this requirement for a successful relationship in more poetic terms: "And this more humane love (which will be brought to fruition with infinite care and quietly, whose joining and separating will be proper and unambiguous) will resemble that kind of love, which we prepare arduously and laboriously, that love, which consists in this, that two solitudes protect, border and greet one another."³ While reflecting upon marital love, Kahlil Gibran underscores the same essential issues:

"... let there be spaces in your togetherness,
And let the winds of the heavens dance between you.
Love one another but make not a bond of love:
Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your
souls.
Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup.

Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same
 loaf.
 Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of
 you be alone,
 Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver
 with the same music.
 Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping.
 For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts.
 And stand together, yet not too near together:
 For the pillars of the temple stand apart,
 And the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's
 shadow."⁴

In his discussion of love, Erich Fromm likewise underscores the identical characteristic. "It is a relationship between two people who experience themselves as separate entities. . . . In order to experience love one must experience separateness."⁵ While analysing the various forms of incestuous ties (some more inhibiting, more pathological than others), the psychologist concludes: "For the symbiotically attached person it is very difficult, if not impossible, to sense a clear delineation between himself and the host person. . . . The more extreme the form of symbiosis, the less possible is a clear realization of the separateness of the two persons."⁶ Consequently, others are not experienced as being "fully human."⁷

From the myriad examples presented in the previous pages, Emmenberger clearly did not intend to sustain, let alone further the lives of those within his purview; nor did he regard them as fully human. On the contrary, his treatment or rather maltreatment of e.g., Nehle, Gulliver, Marlok, the dwarf, and Bärlach always led, if not to the death of those within his control, then to their physical and/or emotional undoing.

This wanton disregard of others as separate entities leads to the *third* characteristic of evil people and is frequently, if not always, manifested by means of verbal depersonalization. In Dürrenmatt's novel, these depersonalizations fall into two broad categories. 1. A devalued individual internalizes a negative self-image and subsequently devalues him- or herself. 2. An individual reduces another to someone of a lower social class, an animal, an object, an appendage or a number, in other words, to anything deemed less than fully human.

Edith Marlok's relentless and demoralizing victimization at the hands of the Russians, the SS as well as Emmenberger does not require elaboration. The manner in which she consequently speaks about herself reflects the undeniable changes in her vastly altered self-image. In her final exchange with Bärlach, the physician reveals a crucial segment of her past in

showing him the number affixed to her right arm. "Into her lower arm, deep into the flesh a number had been burned, like a cattle brand." (216) She answers his question as to whether she was in a concentration camp by simply saying: "'Edith Marlok, prisoner 4466 in the extermination camp Stutthof near Danzig.'" (216)

Anyone solely identified by a number can readily learn to think of him- or herself as less than human. Whereas upon first meeting Dr. Edith Marlok, Bärlach makes the following observation: "The woman was beautiful . . . she was a lady. . . ." (200), in her last conversation with him, she refers to herself as a "'female.'" (226) As the two continue their dialogue, she reduces her significance even further: "'If I could take you through this hospital, inspector, through this Sonnenstein, which has made me what I am, neither female nor male, only flesh. . . .'" (223) Treated like an animal, she deems herself as nothing more than a cut of meat. How true is John Powell's observation: "Our lives are indeed shaped by those who love us . . . and by those who refuse to love us."⁸ Taken aback just for a moment, Marlok attempts to describe to the incredulous police inspector her motivation for initially becoming Emmenberger's lover. Again she denigrates herself: "'A torturer took pity on a chronically ailing bitch,' she said finally." (217) Before leaving the elderly policeman's hospital room, she does so one last time: "'You already shudder in the presence of an insignificant, disgraced servant of this world, who has been sullied a thousand times over.'" (226)

Since the young physician holds herself in scant regard, it is surely not surprising that she considers herself as well as all other human beings totally ineffectual, hence totally worthless. Marlok reprimands Bärlach's idealism in the following assessment: "'Our dictum to combat evil . . . makes sense in a vacuum . . . but not on the planet, on which we hurl through the galaxies like witches on a broomstick.'" (218) She continues to subject him to the recitation of her wartime travails and again resorts not only repeatedly to animal, but also to faceless, to diabolical imagery. "'When after a journey of several weeks . . . in the midst of a bunch of tattered figures, I was driven across a pathetic wooden bridge, . . . I understood the manner of the betrayal, which was being perpetrated in regard to us God-forsaken poor devils. . . .'" (219)

When Bärlach exhorts her never to surrender her struggle on behalf of the poor and the exploited, it wouldn't be logical for her to consider the reminders of someone she also deems forever lost. Consequently in using synecdoche she alludes to his extreme physical vulnerability by focusing attention on his decimated condition: "'A beautiful skeleton grins at you, doesn't it, representing the chief criminal investigator of the city of Berne!'" (218) A few moments later, she reminds him that particularly in view of his

recent retirement, his reach does indeed exceed his grasp: “‘But a police dog well past his prime wants for more, I assume.’” (220)

Herself denigrated and fully cognizant of her degradation, she demeans in turn. As stated before, Marlok, the victim, becomes the victimizer. In some ways the case of the dwarf proves identical; in others it does not.

Since he can only utter unintelligible sounds, (261) he cannot be expected to describe the full measure of his devaluation in his own words as Dr. Marlok had done so eloquently. He cannot be expected to articulate how his self-image had been altered as a result of Emmenberger’s mistreatment. In this instance, it is only possible to observe the extent of the depersonalization for which the Swiss physician was responsible.

It may be recalled that in his last dialogue with the police inspector, Dr. Emmenberger refers to the dwarf as a “‘useful tool’” and then quickly adds: “‘Already back then it almost managed to trip me up, this ludicrous thing. . . .’” He continues his damning description in using such terms as: “‘shrimp’” and concludes his degradation of this impoverished human being in saying: “‘I’ve always loved curiosities, and a disgraced human being still manages to serve as the most reliable of instruments. Because the small monkey sensed, that he owed me his life, he allowed himself to be trained most advantageously.’” (247) Taken from a single paragraph, these lines offer no fewer than eight examples of depersonalization; in each of them an already vulnerable human being is reduced to either an animal or an object. The dwarf’s value consisted only in his usefulness in fulfilling Emmenberger’s expectations and not his own. He had only as much worth as Emmenberger allotted to him and not a fraction more. The diabolical physician did not accord the dwarf the intrinsic value that all human beings may claim as their birth right. Solely identified by means of his disfigurement, his shortcomings, never in the course of the novel is he even given a name. In other words, Emmenberger considered the dwarf merely an extension of himself and consequently felt free to do with him as he pleased. He functioned merely as his appendage.

When describing just how the dwarf managed to kill Fortschig in a manner baffling the local police, Emmenberger emphasizes this particular type of depersonalization in referring to him as “‘Tom Thumb.’” (239) He uses the same term, when telling Bärlach just how he is planning the murder of his long-time friend and fellow physician, Dr. Samuel Hungertobel. (246) While thinking out loud in Bärlach’s presence about who might have realized that he was one and the same as Dr. Nehle of Stutthof, Emmenberger again reiterates this type of depersonalization. He surmises that perhaps it could have been someone who knew him both in the concentration camp as well as in his Swiss sanatorium and the dwarf would undoubtedly belong to that

number, and yet, he quickly posits that that eventuality remains slim “for I have all the entities, which I brought with me from Stutthof, firmly under control. . . .” (243) For one reason or another, he has negated their independence and endeavoured to suppress their ability to act as they would choose.

In the novel’s final, heart-rending scene, Emmenberger no longer among the living, Bärlach, Gulliver and the dwarf meet one last time. Within these pages, Bärlach’s wise Jewish friend, who frequently took matters into his own hands, addresses the dwarf in some of the same demeaning terms used by his former adversary. He first summons him, “. . . as if whistling for a dog.” (261) And then proceeds to address him: “‘There you are, my little monkey, my little animal, my little monster from hell,’ the Jew encouraged the dwarf with his mellifluous voice. ‘My poor Minotaur. . . .’” (261) And yet the difference as to usage for Emmenberger and Gulliver would seem unmistakable. He continues: “‘. . . my disgraced elf, you, who so often in the blood-red nights of Stutthof fell asleep in my arms, crying and whimpering, you the only companion of my poor Jewish soul!’” (261-262) Due to the discrepancy in size and the level of articulation as pointed out earlier, Gulliver and the dwarf constitute polar opposites. Excellent friends nonetheless, they understand each other on an emotional level, care for each other as only those can, who suffer the same fate.

“Come, my little monkey,” he called out and whistled. With a single powerful leap, whimpering and babbling, the dwarf shot forward and bounded onto the Jew’s left shoulder.

“Now you’ve got it, my little murderer,” the giant praised him. “The two of us will stay together. Both of us are ostracized from society, you due to natural causes and I, because I belong to the dead.” (264-265)

Psychologists tell us the more self-centred, the more narcissistic the individual the more likely he or she is to project onto others their own assumptions, their needs, their self-image.⁹ “Since they do not perceive others as others but only as extensions of themselves, narcissistic individuals lack the capacity to feel what *another* is feeling.”¹⁰ While encouraging us not to do likewise and consequently to experience fully the unrepeatable nature of the present moment and all it may potentially offer, Sam Keen delineates the prerequisites for such an encounter. “In order for genuine novelty to emerge, for the unique presence of things, persons, or events to take root in me, I must undergo a decentralization of the ego.”¹¹ As Emmenberger, the total egotist, consistently devalues, dehumanizes, reduces to things and non-human creatures, both Marlok and the dwarf, what does that incontrovertible

evidence tell us about his belief system, his view of himself? Not surprisingly, he does not regard himself as fully human, as a unique individual, but rather as an inanimate object. While repeatedly demanding that Bärlach do the same in order to secure his release, Emmenberger elucidates his value system unequivocally, comprehensively.

Basing his arguments on the false premise that Christians believe in one thing, the trinity, rather than in three persons, he continues: “. . . so I believe in two things, which are one and the same, that something exists and that I am. I believe in matter . . . which is tangible as an animal, a plant or as coal and intangible, almost immeasurable, as an atom. . . . And I believe that I am a part of this matter, atom, power, mass, molecule just as you are. . . .” (250-251) In other words, the Swiss physician only holds to be real, and consequently valid, what our senses can perceive, what can be quantified, what we can claim by virtue of reason alone. He further considers one thing to be as good as another, all things products of chance and therefore meaningless: “. . . whatever I see, all are random groupings, irrelevancies, as foam or a wave is something irrelevant; it is irrelevant if something exists or does not exist; everything is interchangeable.” (251) In his mind, this randomness makes a mockery of the notion of freedom. We are not free, but tossed about at will, he maintains. How can one believe in brotherly love, while simultaneously acknowledging this alleged perversion of freedom?

“It is nonsense to believe in the primacy of matter and *simultaneously* in humanism, you can only believe in matter and the self. There is no such thing as justice - how could matter be just - there is only one freedom, which cannot be earned - in order for that to be true, there would have to be such a thing as justice - which cannot be given - who could give it - which must be taken. Freedom is the courage to commit crimes, because it itself is a crime.” (252)

Despite his increasingly hopeless situation, the imperilled Bärlach adroitly synthesizes Emmenberger's belief system. “You believe in nothing but the right to torture people!” (252)

Without hesitation Emmenberger admits to his ever-weakening adversary that he understands him perfectly. “That's what I call a good pupil, who dares to formulate the principle according to which I live.” (252) Paradoxically enough, the principle according to which Emmenberger chooses to actualize his life only serves to destroy and/or diminish the lives revolving forcibly around his own.

Notes

1. M[organ] Scott Peck, *The Road Less Traveled: A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1978, pp. 160-161.
2. Ibid., p.161.
3. Rainer Maria Rilke, *Briefe an einen jungen Dichter*, 1929, Insel, Frankfurt, 1992, p. 39.
4. Kahlil Gibran, *The Prophet*, Knopf, New York, 1996, pp. 16-17.
5. Erich Fromm, *The Heart of Man: Its Genius for Good and Evil*, 1964, Harper, New York, 1987, p. 88.
6. Ibid., p. 104.
7. Ibid., p. 107.
8. John Powell, *Through the Seasons of the Heart*, Tabor, Allen, TX, 1987, pp. 259.
9. Peck, pp. 160-169.
10. Ibid., p. 163.
11. Sam Keen, *To a Dancing God: Notes of a Spiritual Traveler*, Harper, New York, 1990, p. 28.

Chapter Four: Narcissism

There seemed to be no lengths to which they would not go. . . .

Given the Swiss physician's persistent record of maltreatment, it seems the grossest understatement to assert that he strives to further only his own wishes, only his own aggrandizement. This extreme form of self-centeredness, frequently synonymous with overt lawlessness, constitutes the *fourth* characteristic of evil individuals. In describing his sadistic operations to Bärlach, Emmenberger's next intended victim, the academically gifted *Höllenfürst* alludes repeatedly to the inherent boundlessness of his narcissism: "I dared to be myself and nothing else; I devoted myself to that which liberated me, murder and torture. . . ." And again: ". . . when I set myself apart beyond the reach of all human norms . . . then I am free, I evolve into nothing but a moment in time. . . ." He concludes his diabolical disquisition with this assertion: ". . . this trembling, unconscious white flesh under my knife mirrors *my* triumph and *my* freedom and nothing but these." (252)

In order to substantiate his definition of individual evil, Dr. Peck refers to a number of his own patients within *People of the Lie*. While delineating the case histories of Roger and his parents as well as Charlene, the psychiatrist maintains that, during his sustained encounter with these individuals, the sheer overwhelming force of their self-absorption never ceased to make itself felt over and over again. Their unrelenting insistence on furthering their own ends, while glibly destroying others, seemed to know no limits.

In his introduction to *A Priest in Stutthof*, Charles Angoff, while attempting to gauge the exact measure of the Nazi atrocities, formulates the following questions: "To what depths of torture did they plunge? Did they not stop at anything?" He answers his rhetorical inquiries in saying: "Alas, apparently they did not stop at anything. . . ." ¹

Concerning the attitude of Roger's parents toward their son, Peck notes:

First there is the matter of the degree to which they were willing to sacrifice Roger for the preservation of their narcissistic self-image. There seemed to be no lengths to which they would not go. . . . I sensed no limit to their willingness to use him as a scapegoat if necessary. ²

In other words, they are willing to label their son as “hopeless, incurable, and malformed”³ rather than accept the suggestion that their judgment might be at fault, that they might have contributed to Roger’s verifiable deterioration.

Though in some aspects Charlene’s situation proved dissimilar to Roger’s, some of the phrases the psychiatrist uses to describe her consistent inability to function effectively, despite her considerable gifts, sound all too familiar. “Repeatedly I attempted to explain to her . . . how her disregard of others was at the core of her failures, and how self-destructive was her extreme narcissism.”⁴ In another of Charlene’s sessions, Dr. Peck’s forthright explanations, concerning a rather simple point, once again resulted in his utter frustration.

I gave up. For the moment I was just too tired of batting my head against the impregnable walls of Charlene’s obliviousness. As far as she was concerned, my feelings did not really exist.

Autism is narcissism in its ultimate form. For the complete narcissist, others have no more psychological reality than a piece of furniture.⁵

The more self-absorbed an individual, the less able he or she is to perceive objective reality. This wilful blindness not only to the needs of others, but also to their own legitimate needs, precludes realistic other-and/or self-assessment. Charlene did not wield obvious power; her actions seemed rather inconsequential. Nevertheless Peck continues his argument. “But suppose she had been the employer rather than the employee. Suppose she had inherited not a small trust fund, but a whole corporation. . . . Or, more feasibly, simply suppose that Charlene became a mother.”⁶ The havoc, the damage, the pain for which she would have been responsible would have been incalculable. As her reach proved small, the detrimental effects of her behaviour did not extend far. Perhaps she only shared the fate of many a bumbling, unfulfilled person. Yet, even allowing for this interpretation, Peck issues a caveat. “Intellectually brilliant, Charlene was infinitely less. Although apparently quite happy, as she ploughed through life leaving a wake of minor chaos behind her, and remarkably content with her impotence, I think she was one of the saddest people I have ever met.”⁷

Had she accessed sufficient power, however, as Emmenberger manages to do, had the prevailing political system supported her extraordinary wilfulness, as Emmenberger’s had done far too long, her large-scale dismissal of others would have invariably led to her disregard of both moral as well as cogent civil law. Rampant lawlessness follows logically from such wanton inattention to the rights of others. Peck concludes: “Give

her a nation and she would likely have been a Hitler or an Idi Amin.”⁸ Give her a hospital and she would have been an Emmenberger.

Notes

1. Charles Angoff, ‘Introduction,’ *A Priest in Stutthof: Human Experiences in the World of Subhuman*, by Stasys Yla, Nola M. Zobarskas (trans), Manyland Books, New York, 1971, p. v.
2. M[organ] Scott Peck, *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1983, p. 106.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 167.
5. Ibid., p. 165.
6. Ibid., p. 177.
7. Ibid., p. 178.
8. Ibid., p. 177.

Chapter Five: Abuse of Power

Mental health requires that the human will submit itself to something higher than itself.

But she wasn't an Emmenberger, she was just Charlene and no one would mistake one for the other. Yet despite their obvious differences, they share the *fifth* characteristic of evil persons: both wanted to acquire and exercise power for its own sake. Power may be defined as the intent and the ability to actualize one's wishes; the term implies potency.¹ Since he decided over life and death in both the concentration camps and in his clinic, Emmenberger doubtlessly exercised the ultimate power. But to what end? His display of power remained utterly meaningless. As has been stated repeatedly, his actions did not enhance the lives of those in his purview, nor did they lead to his success, his fulfilment. Yet he attempts to convince Bärlach and also himself of the diametric opposite; “. . . this trembling, unconscious white flesh under my knife mirrors *my* triumph and *my* freedom and nothing but these.” (252)

Charlene, on the other hand, only wanted to terminate the relationship between her therapist and herself at the moment and in the manner she deemed acceptable. That goal she manages to achieve, but what she attains also proves “ultimately meaningless.”² For it did not benefit her in any way, did not further, let alone accelerate, her healing. As Peck comments: “She did not want power in order to improve society, to care for a family, to make herself a more effective person, or in any way accomplish anything creative. Her thirst for power was unsubordinated to anything higher than itself.”³

Contradictory though it may seem, even the forging and maintenance of successful interpersonal relationships depend upon the judicious use of power. Rollo May phrases this absolutely essential element in his inimitable way.

There is required a self-assertion, a capacity to stand on one's own feet, an affirmation of one's self in order to have the power to put one's self into the relationship. One must have something to give and be able to give it. The danger, of course, is that he will overassert himself. . . . But this negative side is not to be escaped by giving up self-assertion. For if one is unable to assert oneself, one is unable to participate in a genuine relationship. A dynamic dialectical relationship . . . is a continuous give-and-take in which one asserts himself, finds an answer in the other, then

possibly asserts too far, senses a “no” in the other, backs up but does not give up, shifts the participation to a new form, and finds the way that is adequate for the wholeness of the other.⁴

May’s observation does not speak of weakness, but of strength, not of self-negation to the point of total self-effacement, but of an assured, self-accepting individual, who with “sensitivity and tenderness”⁵ willingly assumes the risks inherent in relating to another.

Rollo May considers the appropriate use of power essential for the continuation of life-sustaining relationships; for to exert a significant amount of power tells us that we value ourselves and are valued in turn. Power may be considered synonymous with the “urge to reach out toward others, to increase life by way of sex, to create, to civilize; it is the joy and rapture, or the simple security of knowing that we matter, that we can affect others, can form them. . . .”⁶

Whether one desires to manage a business or a household, to create a work of art or raise a child, the end envisioned determines the legitimate use of power. If power realizes a negative or destructive result, the potency exercised is used perversely, or as Erich Fromm suggests that type of power remains nothing more than domination.⁷

Who endeavours to dominate for the sake of dominating? Not a strong individual, as it might seem at first glance. Fromm concludes: “*the lust for power is not rooted in strength but in weakness.*”⁸ Such persons strive to dominate another for he or she essentially fears the other, the demands others may make, in essence all of life’s demands. Those who believe, more often than not only on a subconscious level, that they cannot subsist in the face of life’s essential unpredictability, cannot cope with the questions their days may ask of them, cannot stand on their own, these individuals feel compelled to minimize these risks at all costs. They do so in attempting to control every aspect of another’s behaviour, in forcibly limiting their options. For various reasons, however, undesirable as well as ineffective, domination clearly functions as a survival mechanism. Confident individuals, who are generally able to self-actualize, to develop their talents, to contribute while maintaining their integrity, these persons don’t exhibit the need for domination.⁹

Domination or the misuse of power is unsubordinated to anything other than itself. Yet Peck asserts: “Mental health requires that the human will submit itself to something higher than itself.”¹⁰ Depending on their orientation, some define this governing principle as common sense or the needs of others. The religiously inclined would define it as God. In the Our Father, does a Christian not pray: “Thy will be done”?¹¹ Consequently, an

unsubmitted will characterizes evil persons. Such unbridled wilfulness does not seek to enrich, but as Emmenberger devastatingly illustrates, seeks only to destroy.

The plea of the anti-hero of André Gide's *L'Immoraliste* delivered in the novel's last sighs comes to mind as yet another example. A brilliant mind, Michel achieves in his mid-twenties what most academicians don't realize until much later in life, if indeed at all. In the emotional sphere, he experiences the love of a devoted wife - whom he has just laid to rest - and asks his three friends to help him find his way; he senses that he is lost, is unhappy and doesn't know where to turn. Clearly the methods he used till now did not bring him the happiness or the fulfilment he sought so desperately.

“What frightens me, I'll admit, is that I am still quite young. Sometimes it seems to me that I haven't begun to live as yet. Tear me away from this place now and give me a reason for living. I no longer know where to find it.”¹²

Michel is fully aware that he has surrendered his academic position, the estate he oversaw and has lost the attachment to his wife. Indeed, he was thoroughly successful in liberating himself from all obligations, or from all he would consider subservience. But the central question remains: “I set myself free, that's possibly true; but what of it? This useless freedom makes me so unhappy.”¹³

It is not enough to exercise one's freedom; that same freedom must be exercised for some verifiable good. Michel did not lack for effort, did not lack the will to be subservient to his goals. The friend who delivers the transcript of Michel's soliloquy to his brother and drafts its preface admits as much. “How can Michel serve the state? . . . Michel is devoted; he is that still; soon he will only be devoted to himself.”¹⁴ Dedication in and of itself is not enough; to whom and to what one is dedicated constitutes the crux of the matter.

Without a doubt, those individuals perpetrating the Holocaust did in fact submit their wills to a higher authority, a principle, they considered worthy of such submission. In *Raids on the Unspeakable*, Thomas Merton cites the case of Adolf Eichmann, who “had a profound respect for system, for law and order. He was obedient. . . . He served his government very well.” He was an “unperturbed official conscientiously going about . . . his administrative job which happened to be the supervision of mass murder.”¹⁵

Though a psychiatrist pronounced him sane, by virtue of the incontrovertible evidence against him, would we consider him human? In order to appreciate the limits of both medical and legal assessments, one need

only peruse Hervey Cleckley's classic: *The Mask of Sanity*.¹⁶ In other words, submission itself is not enough; one must conscientiously examine the beliefs to which one submits. We all submit one way or another. We all order our lives according to a set of explicit or implicit guidelines.¹⁷ Lord Henry Wotton's statement to Dorian Gray notwithstanding, an individual without principles does not exist. ". . . I like persons with no principles better than anything else in the world." (13-14)

Notes

1. Erich Fromm, *Escape from Freedom*, 1941, Henry Holt, New York, 1994, p. 160.
2. M[organ] Scott Peck, *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1983, p. 177.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 176.
4. Rollo May, *Love and Will*, Delta, New York, 1989, p. 146.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 147.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 146.
7. Fromm, p. 160.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*, p. 161.
10. Peck, p. 162. For further corroboration of this axiom, see also: Stanley Cohen, *States of Denial: Knowing about Atrocities and Suffering*, 2001, Polity Press, Cambridge, UK, 2002, p. 57. "However elusive the concept of mental health, all definitions refer to the accurate perception of reality. An official 1958 review defines perception as mentally healthy when 'what the individual sees corresponds with what is really there' and 'is able to take in matters one wishes were different without distorting them to fit these wishes.'"
11. *The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition*, Matthew 6: 10, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999. Even for the well-intentioned, ascertaining God's will can become problematical. Gerald May writes: "In my opinion, the relationship between personal and divine will is the most fierce and treacherous confrontation faced by modern spiritual guides and leaders. It demands that they be constantly attentive to and critical of their own spiritual inclinations. . . . The question is deceptively simple to ask and exquisitely difficult to answer: Am I truly seeking to do Thy will...or mine?" Gerald May, *Care of Mind/Care of Spirit: Psychiatric Dimensions of Spiritual Direction*, Harper, San Francisco, CA, 1982, pp.16-17.

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12. André Gide, 'L'Immoraliste,' *Oeuvres Complètes*, L [ouis]- Martin-Chauffier (ed), vol. 4, NRF, Paris, 1933, p. 169.
 13. Ibid.
 14. Ibid., p. 10.
 15. Thomas Merton, *Raids on the Unspeakable*, New Directions, New York, 1966, p. 45. See also: Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*, Viking Press, New York, 1963, p. 135.
 16. Hervey Cleckley, *The Mask of Sanity: An Attempt To Clarify Some Issues About the So-Called Psychopathic Personality*, 3rd edn., Mosby, St. Louis, MO, 1955, p. 19. "Many of these people, legally judged as competent, are more dangerous to themselves and to others than are some patients whose psychiatric disability will necessitate their spending their entire lives in the State Hospital. Though certified automatically as *sane* by the verbal definitions of law and of medicine, their behavior demonstrates an irrationality and incompetence that are gross and obvious." See also: 'Enter God, Stage Left: *Ethics and Submission*,' M[organ] Scott Peck, *A World Waiting To Be Born: Civility Rediscovered*, Bantam, New York, 1993, pp. 43-54.
 17. John Powell reflects at some length on the necessity as well as the possible consequences of this ordering mechanism, this dominant life principle, in a slim volume: John Powell, *Unconditional Love: Love without Limits*, Thomas More, Allen, TX, 1999, pp.1-13.

Chapter Six: Scapegoating

He sealed his fate himself. . . .

To this point five characteristics of evil individuals have been discussed: 1. compromising of body and/or spirit, 2. failure to acknowledge the other's separateness, 3. depersonalization, 4. extreme self-centeredness, 5. the illegitimate use of power. When those perpetrating evil by any or all of these five means are met with the (to the sane mind) expected resistance of their victims, the perpetrators frequently respond to these assaults in thoroughly predictable fashion. They scapegoat. Scapegoating constitutes the *sixth* characteristic of evil individuals. This all-too-pervasive phenomenon may be variously described, but is easily recognized. When something goes awry, as it invariably does, when others protest their ill treatment, as they invariably do, if they dare, the evil always blame the other parties or the particular difficulty, if not the structure of the world in and of itself. Anyone, but him- or herself, anything but the issue at hand will be ascertained to be at fault. From their vantage point, this behaviour seems only logical, for on one level the evil consider themselves faultless. And if the failure's cause cannot be acknowledged within, then it must be found without. Erich Neumann describes the fundamental defence mechanism perfectly.

The shadow, which contradicts the values (held), cannot be accepted as a negative part of one's self and will therefore be projected, i.e., displaced outward and will be experienced as something out there. It will be fought, punished and eradicated as "something alien out there," rather than "part and parcel of the self."¹

Paradoxically enough, the act of scapegoating, every human being's unwillingness to face his or her own failures, lies at the crux of Christianity. In his *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, C. S. Lewis captures the essence of Christ's redemptive sacrifice as only he could.

"She [the Witch] would have known that when a willing victim who had committed no treachery was killed in a traitor's stead, the Table would crack and Death itself would start working backwards."²

In the final analysis, scapegoating not only constitutes projection, but the failure to assume the appropriate degree of responsibility. Whereas the neurotic personality assumes an excessive amount of responsibility, the

individual with a character disorder doesn't assume enough, if any.³ The former believes that the root of the failure (or success) lies only within themselves; by contrast, the latter will claim just the opposite. They are not in any way to blame for the conflict, for the less than desirable results.

In his delineation of these personality defects, Scott Peck suggests that those with character disorders may be recognized in two ways: not only do the lame explanations for their actions identify these individuals, but also their verifiable predilection for certain phrases. "The speech of a person with a character disorder . . . relies heavily on 'I can't,' 'I couldn't,' 'I have to,' and 'I had to,' demonstrating a self-image of a being who has no power of choice, whose behavior is completely directed by external forces totally beyond his or her control."⁴

In his final encounter with his compromised, if determined, adversary, Fritz Emmenberger proves himself the chronic and eloquent scapegoater.

In his unrelenting diatribe, the Swiss physician justifies the murder of Fortschig in placing the entire blame for his demise upon the unfortunate writer himself. It may be recalled from an earlier chapter, that Bärlach had asked his enthusiastic, if misguided friend, to draft an article stating in blatant terms that a physician currently heading his own clinic in Zurich was none other than a former war criminal. That portion of Bärlach's instructions Fortschig did indeed follow. He not only wrote the article, but also dispatched the pointed accusations to several local hospitals. Although not to Bärlach, Emmenberger's reaction was predictable. "When someone demands the death sentence with so much pathos, surely he deserves a reprimand. . . ." (237) Already in this straightforward sentence, Emmenberger employs the phraseology typical of those foisting their own misdeeds onto others: I couldn't do otherwise; in view of Fortschig's ill-scripted appeal, he deserved nothing else.

The murder of Nehle finds its justification in a similar manner. While only focusing on the advantages accruing to Nehle from the agreement between the Berliner and himself and failing to mention his own, Emmenberger recounts Nehle's return to Germany from Chile. Though Emmenberger admits to killing Nehle, in the same breath he casts the blame upon the latter: "He sealed his fate himself . . . and simulated the most beautiful suicide imaginable." (244)

Characteristic of evil persons, Emmenberger stops at nothing when accusing others of shortcomings - perceived or actual. Even, or more accurately particularly, Bärlach is not exempt. Though the physician uses every means at his employ to break the ill and aging policeman, both physically and psychologically, Emmenberger tells Bärlach repeatedly that he is source of unending trouble. "You give me an inordinate amount of

work.” (238) Whereas the murder of Fortschig could be delegated to the dwarf, with Bärlach he would have to deal himself. (239) Or he accuses Bärlach of not cooperating in this exchange, which quickly deteriorates into a cross-examination. “You are not at all accommodating in our cross-examination.” (240) Despite the hopelessness of his situation, combative still and ever the representative of the law, Bärlach attempts to set the record straight. “I have to cross examine you, not you me,’ countered the inspector defiantly.” (240)

Fortschig, Nehle and Bärlach, all three were and are to blame in Emmenberger’s eyes for their maltreatment at his behest or at his hands. His narcissism knew no limits; his scapegoating does not either. How could it be otherwise? With his inexorable, if twisted logic, one follows from the other. And twisted it is.

On one level, Emmenberger is an intelligent, insightful as well as articulate individual; consequently some of the observations postulated in his final conversation with Bärlach do hold some merit. At times life does seem dreadfully unfair. The unscrupulous seem to thrive, while decent and well-meaning folk encounter one serious difficulty after another. (251-252) Yet after further examination, the premise that lies at the core of his belief system does not correspond to reality. He begins his exposition by claiming that he believes in the primacy of matter. Only that which can be perceived by the senses or measured in some way exists. He, too, exists only as matter. And the fact that he exists gives him the right to do as he pleases. For all of creation, including himself, is only a product of chance.

“Nothing is holy but matter: a human being, an animal, a plant, the moon, the Milky Way, whatever I may see, they are creations of chance, inconsequential, just as foam or a ripple of water is something inconsequential; it is irrelevant whether these things exist or don’t exist; they are interchangeable.” (251)

And if, as he professes, one thing is as good as another and all a haphazard hodgepodge then freedom is indeed a myth, a lie. We don’t have free will, cannot determine the rhythm of our lives and even if we could, one life is as good as another; we have no power or to phrase it another way, the power we wield is a sham. Life is inherently meaningless and what we do doesn’t matter. We don’t matter. Believing as he does, Emmenberger concludes his embittered disquisition: “Freedom is the courage to commit crimes, because it itself is a crime.” (252)

Bärlach rephrases his credo for him. “‘I understand,’ called out the inspector. . . . ‘You believe in nothing but the right to torture people!’” (252) And Emmenberger instantly agrees with his adversary’s assessment.

But we do have free will; we do determine the shape of our souls, if not always, the course of our lives. We do matter. We are the product of our choices.

When our days become increasingly difficult, when adversity dogs every step and of travails there seems no end in sight, when life is stripped to its essentials, when there’s little if any time to reflect, then what and in whom do we believe? While in a concentration camp, in that most extreme of human (or subhuman) conditions, Viktor Frankl’s thoughts revolved around some of these same fundamental questions.

But what about human liberty? Is there no spiritual freedom in regard to behavior and reaction to any given surroundings? Is that theory true which would have us believe that man is no more than a product of many conditional and environmental factors - be they of a biological, psychological or sociological nature? Is man but an accidental product of these?⁵

Denying the existence of free will, Emmenberger would have replied with an emphatic “yes” to the last two of these queries. But Frankl prevails. “Most important, do the prisoners’ reactions to the singular world of the concentration camp [the camp may be deemed reflective of all circumstances of high duress] prove that man cannot escape the influences of his surroundings? Does man have no choice of action in the face of such circumstances?”⁶

Frankl answers his questions with a resounding affirmation of all that is best in the human spirit. As he was not only a brilliant psychiatrist, but also a camp survivor, his replies reflect not only theory, but practice. In *Man’s Search for Meaning*, he recalls example after example of those who defied insurmountable odds and responded with compassion and nobility under the most dehumanizing of conditions. Even as Emmenberger’s crazed behaviour betrayed his principles, the self-restraint, the kindness of these few inmates told others what they believed. “[T]hey offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms - to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way.”⁷

Lest one fall victim to the illusion that a concentration camp offered a dearth of options, Frankl reemphasizes his initial position. “And there were always choices to make. Every day, every hour, offered the opportunity to

make a decision, a decision which determined whether you would or would not submit to those powers which threatened to rob you of your very self, your inner freedom. . . .”⁸ In determining how we treat others, we also determine the manner in which we treat ourselves, in what we make of ourselves. If we treat others with cruelty, regardless of their reaction, we become cruel. (And the reverse is also true.) Despite his considerable intelligence, Emmenberger never acknowledges that inexorable link. In destroying others, he destroys himself. How could it be otherwise?

Notes

1. Erich Neumann, *Tiefenpsychologie und neue Ethik*, Rascher, Zürich, 1949, p. 36.
2. C[live] S[taples] Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe: A Story for Children*, Collier, New York, 1970, p. 160.
3. M[organ] Scott Peck, *The Road less Traveled: A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1979, p. 35.
4. Ibid., p. 36.
5. Viktor E. Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning: An Introduction to Logotherapy*, Part One, Ilse Lasch (trans), Washington Square Press, New York, 1963, p. 103.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., p. 104.
8. Ibid.

Chapter Seven: Lying

Any one of us can look like a murderer.

As scapegoating endeavours to place blame and assign responsibility where it does not rightfully belong, that attempt qualifies as a type of lying. And the evil are experts at lying, their *seventh* characteristic. At the outset, it should be mentioned that, though there are a seemingly endless variety of lies, *never* does evil exist without lies. Lies intend to dissemble, to keep the other off guard and guessing, to create distance for the purpose of escaping detection, in other words, to confuse.

While reflecting upon Charlene, one of the first cases of evil encountered in his psychiatric practice, Scott Peck makes the following observations. Were he given the opportunity to treat her again, he would more readily acknowledge his confusion. “I know now that one of the characteristics of evil is its desire to confuse. I had been aware of my confusion within a month of beginning work with Charlene. . . . I never entertained the notion in the first year that possibly I was confused because she wanted to confuse me.”¹

An evil individual may not exhibit all the named characteristics, but within the over-all constellation even the less-than-astute observer will find not one attempt to confuse, but several, not one, but several lies. In the case of Fritz Emmenberger, they are not difficult to enumerate. Of necessity, a master at scapegoating is also a master of lying.

In his first exchange with Bärlach, when the policeman enters his hospital in Zurich and asks the physician outright whether he ever had occasion to visit Germany, Emmenberger claims to have spent considerable amount of time in Chile and not in Germany. (201) In his final encounter with the by then terrified police inspector, Emmenberger admits to the collusion between Nehle and himself and adds several situational lies to the initial verbal one. “Let’s admit it: I myself surgically introduced the scar into Nehle’s right eyebrow and the burn wound into his lower left arm, which I also have, in order to make us identical, one out of two.” (243) But, of course, he does not let the matter rest there. Having agreed to assume each other’s names, Emmenberger sent Nehle to Chile, while, as it may be recalled, the Swiss physician entered the world of the concentration camps. To insure Nehle’s silence upon his return from South America at the war’s conclusion, Emmenberger feels he must kill him. But even the manner in which he does so only underscores his duplicitous purposes. He forces Nehle to swallow a capsule of prussic acid, and consequently the Berliner “simulated the most beautiful suicide imaginable.” (244) One lie after another after another. Emmenberger weaves the proverbial web of lies, and

malice of forethought assumes a depth of meaning known to few. He spares himself no effort in furthering his self-image of a respectable, an admirable individual, even while creating victims in the process.

In his dealings with those he ultimately termed evil, Peck repeatedly noted the relentlessness of their subterfuge, the limitlessness of their deceptions.

Utterly dedicated to preserving their self-image of perfection, they are unceasingly engaged in the effort to maintain the appearance of moral purity. . . . The words “image,” “appearance,” and “outwardly” are crucial to understanding the morality of the evil. While they seem to lack any motivation to *be* good, they intensely desire to appear good.²

In elaborating upon his theories regarding the deliberate projection of a suitable persona, Dr. Peck mentions the parents of a young patient. He notes: “. . . they dress well, go to work on time, pay their taxes, and outwardly seem to live lives that are above reproach.”³ In some of these identical ways, Emmenberger also practices to deceive; he, too, chooses his attire with the utmost care. When entering Bärlach’s room for the last time, the physician does not wear his profession’s traditional garb.

He wasn’t in his lab coat, as the police inspector had first seen him, but rather his attire was dark, striped, with a white tie on a shirt of silver grey, a carefully fashioned appearance, almost foppish. . . . (236)

As is the case with so many relevant to the background of Dürrenmatt’s novel, historical fact may also have suggested these details. In their *Mengele: The Complete Story*, Gerald Posner and John Ware relate:

Many have testified to his immaculate and well-manicured appearance as he exercised his power of life and death. . . . Survivors remarked on the impression made by his tight-fitting SS uniform with glistening black boots, white gloves, and polished cane as he surveyed his prey. . . .⁴

An eyewitness account of a Hungarian journalist corroborates the above observations. The only survivor of a forty-nine-member family, Solti Dezso first encountered Josef Mengele at Birkenau in June 1944.

All Jews had to file in front of Mengele: "He looked very good. He looked exceedingly well groomed - in this sad environment, I noticed that immediately. His hair was very thick and dark. I remember his eyes; they were uncommonly bright."

And then Dezso adds the final damning observation: "'He really didn't look like a murderer.'" ⁵ But then wasn't that the point of the studied appearance? And furthermore, what do murderers look like? Dr. Hungertobel in his inimitable, understated manner concludes: "'Any one of us can look like a murderer.'" (167) ⁶

Just as Bobby's parents, outwardly Emmenberger also seems to live a life beyond reproach. For who would suspect a mass murderer behind the carefully crafted image of the owner of a Zurich clinic? (128, 129, 199, 200) Not the benign, if in hindsight somewhat naïve, Dr. Samuel Hungertobel, who has known Emmenberger since they both attended medical school. However the critically ill, Hans Bärlach, will not dismiss his suspicion. Before advancing additional examples of Emmenberger's duplicitous designs, it should be remembered that his clinic catered only to extremely wealthy patients. In deliberately turning his attention to the select few, Emmenberger not only augments his income rather handsomely, (129) but he also severely restricts the number of those who might have access to him, who might perhaps suspect him of wrongdoing.

To create a barrier, to create distance between others and himself is not for Emmenberger a recent *modus operandi*. As he has known Emmenberger for some four decades, Hungertobel supplies the relentlessly probing Bärlach with the missing details of Emmenberger's earlier years. To Bärlach's question as to whether the two became friends in medical school, Hungertobel's answer speaks volumes. "'No,' answered Hungertobel, 'we weren't friends, as far as I know, none of his classmates were friends with him.'" (140) Already in medical school, many agreed that Emmenberger's contribution to his chosen field would be considerable, if not extraordinary; nevertheless his career trajectory proved puzzling. "'His final exam was brilliant, but later he never established his own practice, but substituted here and there, also in my practice. . . .'" (145) This inability to put down roots, to commit to this or that place or person prevailed. Until leaving for Chile, Hungertobel maintains that Emmenberger led a nomadic, a solitary existence. He reinforces the assertion yet again. "'As far as I know, no one had access to him. . . .'" (145) And obviously Emmenberger preferred to remain aloof by whatever means at his disposal; "'he also became a cynical, unreliable type of individual, all the more unpleasant, as no one could cope with his

sarcastic streak.” (145) Upon his supposed return from South America, he resumed his asocial lifestyle. (146)

As stated elsewhere, while in the concentration camp and until alerted by Bärlach as to his identity, Gulliver only knew Emmenberger as Dr. Nehle. Other than that slight of name, the image of the deliberate loner remains the same. Gulliver laments his inability to gauge the mind-set of his tormentor: “‘How often did I attempt to insinuate myself behind this physician’s mask, with whom a conversation proved impossible, who did not associate with anyone from the SS nor with another physician, let alone with a prisoner!’” (163)

Aloof, alone, given a wide berth, some of his patients admired him, others didn’t (145); many had reason to fear him. Until now only his victims knew him for who he was. His public persona served as the perfect cover for his criminal pursuits.

Impeccable attire, an exaggerated and cultivated sense of privacy, both assisted Emmenberger in hiding from justice. Ever the diabolical perfectionist, how could he stop with those measures? In his direct manner, the soon-to-be retired policeman asks Dr. Hungertobel whether Emmenberger’s research can be deemed reputable. As the validity of scientific investigation relies solely upon the establishment of facts and not upon the investigator’s wishful speculations, Hans Bärlach is in effect asking his long-time friend to assess Emmenberger’s relationship to the truth. The devoted physician’s answer does not come as a surprise.

“Once he did good research, but we don’t know if he still does. He works with methods, which must seem questionable to us. We know so little about the hormones, on which his research is focused, and as is the case in all those fields, which science attempts to conquer, there are all sorts of folks. Scholars and charlatans, frequently both in one and the same individual.” (129)

Consequently, not only does Emmenberger capitalize upon the deference often accorded those in the medical profession, even the specialty in which he chose to excel discourages scrutiny of his motivations and activities; both elements tend to remove him from further investigation. Not one or two or three, but a cascade of lies shields this prince of darkness. Acknowledging the intelligence needed to devise such multi-layered and hence virtually impenetrable schemes, one could almost stand in awe of him for the sheer volume of his lies, the effectiveness of the cover-up. Scott Peck formulated the analogous sentiment as he reflects upon his encounter with Roger’s parents.

Then there is also the degree - the depth and distortion - of their lying. Mrs. R. wrote: "I wanted to let you know that we have followed your advice and have sent Roger to boarding school." What an extraordinary statement! It says that I advised them to take Roger out of St. Thomas when I specifically advised against such action. It states that they followed my advice when they specifically did not; my primary advice was that they themselves have therapy. Finally, it implies that they did what they did *because* I advised it, when, in fact, they considered my advice irrelevant. Not one lie, not even two lies, but three lies, all twisted around each other in a single short sentence.

Peck concludes his reflection: "It is, I suppose, a form of genius that one can almost admire for its perversity."⁷

And if all of these were not enough, one more lie overshadowed the Swiss physician's background. As this particular falsehood left millions of victims in its wake, on some level it qualifies as the worst of them all. In the novel's opening chapters, Bärlach could not have been aware of the Nehle/Emmenberger agreement. Consequently, while perusing Nehle's police file, the circumspect and tenacious detective suggests that, despite his indisputable gifts, the Berliner had joined the ranks of the concentration camp physicians. (175) Delineated in earlier sections, the obvious should be stated again; the network of camps was founded upon the erroneous assumption that some individuals did not deserve to live. Or as the Nazis called the euthanasia policies: "die Vernichtung lebensunwerten Lebens."⁸ As was also suggested elsewhere, had this felonious system not supported Emmenberger's sadistic tendencies, he would not have escaped detection as long as he did. The lie, sanctioning the establishment of the camp system and its ancillary operations, served to conceal the villainous nature of this supposed healer. Hidden in plain sight. At least for a while.

Verbal, situational lies, a false premise - they all attempted to form a barrier between Emmenberger and those who would suspect him, those who would bring him to justice. The elaborate system of prevarication that he either devised and/or of which he took advantage in and of itself testifies to the fact that he knew what he was doing was wrong. "There is no need to hide unless we first feel that something needs to be hidden."⁹ In other words, Fritz Emmenberger does have a conscience and it is making itself felt. Somewhat earlier it was stated that evil persons consider themselves to be faultless. Paradoxically the opposite also seems to be true. "The essential component of evil is not the absence of a sense of sin or imperfection but the

unwillingness to tolerate that sense.” Or to phrase it another way: “At one and the same time, the evil are aware of their evil and desperately trying to avoid the awareness.”¹⁰

Notes

1. M[organ] Scott Peck, *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1983, p. 179.
2. Ibid., p. 75.
3. Ibid.
4. Gerald L. Posner and John Ware, *Mengele: The Complete Story*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1986, p. 27.
5. Ulrich Völklein, *Josef Mengele - Der Arzt von Auschwitz*, Steidl, Göttingen, 1999, p. 132.
6. Peck, p. 85.
7. Peck, pp. 106-107.
8. Book One, Chapter One: Victimization offers ample historical evidence of these policies and their far-reaching ramifications, both within the text and in the notes.
9. Peck, p. 76.
10. Ibid.

Chapter Eight: Refusal to Heed Criticism

Evil originates not in the absence of guilt but in the effort to escape it.

Evil individuals do not tolerate reminders of their shortcomings; they do not tolerate legitimate criticism: the *eighth* characteristic.

Whether that criticism originates within or without their persons seems to make scant difference. They will not hear, let alone internalize, a negative truth about themselves. On some level, to subject themselves to any sustained form of introspection - as would, for instance, be germane to the process of psychoanalysis, which could offer healing - “does, in fact, seem to them like suicide.”¹

Obviously, we wouldn’t survive very long without an array of defence mechanisms, both physical and psychological. Although in his exhaustive *The Wisdom of the Ego*, George Vaillant considers some defences as immature, if not psychotic, he also acknowledges that they remain indispensable for our survival. “All reduce unbearable conflict.”² In fact he blurs the lines between survival, coping and defence mechanisms and describes one in terms of the others.

In short, defenses are creative, healthy, comforting, coping, and yet often strike observers as downright peculiar. But that is why defenses - like immune mechanisms - serve adaptation. That is why defenses integrate experience by providing a variety of filters for pain and mechanisms for self-deception. Defenses creatively rearrange the sources of conflict so that they become manageable.³

And yet evil individuals have overdeveloped one particular variant thereof. To admit that they sinned, made a mistake or two, are perhaps prone to making them again and again, and are consequently not faultless seems to represent for them certain death. Though generally not weak-willed, able to exert relentless effort in the realization of their aspirations, they will not attempt to avoid any and all manner of pain. “It is only one particular kind of pain they cannot tolerate: the pain of their own conscience, the pain of the realization of their own sinfulness and imperfection.”⁴ In brief, they do not wish to be reminded that they are human like the rest of us.

It is impossible to be human and not err. “For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known.”⁵ We all make

mistakes; we are all prone to missteps, some larger, some smaller; in our inherent blindness we all inflict unnecessary pain on others as well as ourselves. And yet most of us are not evil. Though no one likes to admit occasional, let alone more frequent, lapses of judgment, sooner or later many of us do. Motivated by a host of secular and/or religious concerns - the hindsight that we might have done differently, the desire to spare others or ourselves the aftermath of our wanton folly, the inefficiency of an immoral life, the wish to return God's love for us - we adjust our subsequent behavioural strategies accordingly. As paradoxical as it may seem: "... evil deeds do not an evil person make."⁶ It is the repeated failure to acknowledge their errors, when circumstances and/or other persons strive to point them out that characterizes the evil. To phrase it another way: "The essential component of evil is not the absence of a sense of sin or imperfection but the unwillingness to tolerate that sense."⁷ And again: "Evil originates not in the absence of guilt but in the effort to escape it."⁸ Due to this "*absolute* refusal" to acknowledge their imperfections that are concomitant with their humanity,⁹ the evil, Peck maintains, lack a self-correcting mechanism; consequently over time, they "become uncorrectable grab bags of sin."¹⁰

In the novel's penultimate chapter, the two elderly adversaries finally face each other alone. No one else can distract or, for that matter, assist either party in this confrontation. Emmenberger utters the first sentence in this exchange; commensurate with his mind-set, his unrelenting desire to dominate, this seems fitting as well as thoroughly logical. Furthermore, as he directs the hospital's day-to-day operations, he can determine the exact moment he chooses to enter Bärlach's room. After the policeman composes himself at least to some minimal degree, he manages to formulate his initial reply. He loses no time in beginning his critique of Emmenberger with the naming of one of the physician's more recent crimes. "'You had poor Fortschig killed,' said Bärlach." (237) He states his accusation directly using a simple straightforward sentence: a single subject, verb and direct object.

This factual statement constitutes the first of Bärlach's criminal and moral indictments against Emmenberger; of this genre it also represents his last. Ever willing to appear in supreme command of the situation, Emmenberger reveals to the policeman the precise means through which Fortschig met his end. (239) Clearly he knows so much more than the police. (246) He also continues to accuse himself in adding one entry after another to the ignominious list of his reprehensible acts; he mentions not only past and present victims, e.g., the dwarf, Nehle, (243-244) Marlok, (239) but also adds two projected victims to the roster: Dr. Hungertobel (246) and Bärlach himself (238). The Swiss physician also explains to the ever more frightened police detective in exhaustive detail all the evidence against him, accumulated over the decades. Among other transgressions, he admits to his

photograph in *Life* and confirms Hungertobel's presence during the hiking excursion some forty years ago (242-243). Nor does he neglect to mention Nehle's articles published in a Swiss medical journal during the war. (244) Were anyone to compare these contributions with the earlier Emmenberger articles, the blatant stylistic discrepancies would engender justified suspicion.

Finally Emmenberger concludes his self-incrimination, the exhaustive accounting of his crimes; even he agrees to this terminology. "Emmenberger shook his head. 'Let's move on to something more credible,' he said. 'To my crimes - to use this popular expression. . .'" (242) Bärlach reaches bottom both physically and emotionally. "He understood that being rescued no longer constituted an option for him." (247) Nevertheless, the policeman moves from the practical to the motivational, to the abstract realm in his charges against Emmenberger. In the identical direct manner he uses at the confrontation's outset, Bärlach accuses him once more. "'You are a nihilist,' he said quietly; he almost whispered into the silent room, in which only the clock ticked away. Unceasingly." (247) As explained in detail in the section on scapegoating, Emmenberger attempts to defend himself with both cogent and less than cogent arguments underlying his incessant cruelty. In striking contrast to the overwhelming volume of Emmenberger's theories, Bärlach cuts to the chase and unerringly summarizes the Swiss physician's belief system in his customary direct style. "'You believe in nothing but in the right to torture people!'" (252) Subservient to his twisted logic, Emmenberger should agree with this damning critique, even if it does originate with his adversary; he does so.

Never one to relinquish what he perceives as the upper hand, he issues to the decimated and psychically eviscerated Bärlach an ultimatum. No matter what arguments he levels against him, Emmenberger will release the condemned policeman - that automatically implies the physician's death, under a single condition. "'But I am making - therein lies my wickedness - your release contingent on a lousy joke, a condition any child could fulfill, that you show me a belief system of equal value to my own.'" (255) Bärlach refuses an answer. Seven times he remains silent. (253-255) Paradoxically the last words, he does say, allude to the same number. "'Seven hours,' Bärlach's whisper, almost inaudible, could be heard from his sick bed." (253)

Since the number seven is mentioned twice, that fact alone encourages at least a brief interpretive word or two. Were the significance of the number to be explained in detail, the parameters of this study would be exceeded. Suffice it to say, that seven represents the universal, the complete, the perfect number.¹¹ In a secular vein, we acknowledge the seven-day week, seven unrepeatable notes of the musical scale;¹² the Ancients believed in seven planets,¹³ the same number of stars in the Pleiades.¹⁴ From a religious perspective, the seven capital sins¹⁵ mentioned in the chapter on narcissism

are counterbalanced by the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit;¹⁶ the sacraments number seven: the spiritual triad - Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist - and the practical quartet - Penance, Holy Orders, Matrimony and the Anointing of the Sick.¹⁷ The Islamic equivalent of the Lord's Prayer - the Fatiha - mirrors the seven-part structure of its Christian counterpart.¹⁸ In deference to Gulliver, we should not neglect to note that seven branches adorn the *menorah* or candelabrum.¹⁹

"Bärlach did not answer." (253) "The old man remained silent." "No answer." (254) These examples represent a random sampling of the determined policeman's steadfast refusal to engage Emmenberger any further. Acutely frustrated, yet threatening, Emmenberger finally leaves the room without eliciting a verbal response from his victim. The silence the physician could not breach speaks more loudly than any words could have; the police detective's muteness, his refusal to cooperate with the enemy, represents his greatest indictment of Emmenberger. For a multitude of reasons.

1. To state the obvious: Bärlach no longer responds because Emmenberger does not deserve that he do so, does not deserve his trust. Were he to state his beliefs - and Emmenberger suggests several possibilities in this regard - would the physician keep his part of the bargain? Upon first telling Bärlach of his wartime experiences, Gulliver did not know that it was Emmenberger, under Nehle's name, who had operated on him without the benefit of anaesthesia; yet he does admit a double and horrible truth. Yes, he is the only one to survive such an ordeal and Emmenberger does fulfil his promise; Gulliver receives whatever constituted medical care under these subhuman circumstances, and Nehle/Emmenberger issues instructions to transport him to a supposedly less dangerous concentration camp. As unbelievable as all aspects of this maltreatment may seem, nevertheless, he keeps his word. (162) In refusing to cooperate with Emmenberger, Bärlach perhaps misjudges his adversary, while simultaneously forfeiting a last opportunity to save himself?

2. Considering the preponderance of the diabolical evidence against Emmenberger and his overweening narcissism, why would he, despite his intelligence, understand or even attempt to understand the rationale for Bärlach's actions and his *modus operandi*? Why should Bärlach continue an exchange with someone whose mind was made up decades ago, who does not wish to listen? In Emmenberger's estimation, everyone has only his or her own interest at heart, all are as egocentric as he is, and furthermore, nothing we do matters anyway. All who believe otherwise are fools. "'It is folly to believe in the primacy of matter and *simultaneously* in being humane; one can only believe in matter and oneself. There is no such thing as justice. . . .'" (252)

3. Perhaps Bärlach retreats into silence because he finally concedes that Emmenberger's cruelty has succeeded in wearing him down. Given Bärlach's desperate condition - as confirmed elsewhere, he is over sixty, officially retired, suffers from cancer and, though not a diabetic, was subjected to needless doses of insulin - what are the chances of surviving Emmenberger's tortuous surgical intervention? Lest he fall victim to any illusions, Emmenberger disabuses him of any and all of these in his customary merciless manner. "You have run out of options; at seven I shall come with my knives and if that doesn't happen (if chance intervenes), in a year you will succumb to your disease. . . ." (241) What is the point of continuing to battle under these circumstances? To him it must seem like ages rather than days, since he responded to Dr. Marlok's damning assessment of Emmenberger's crimes with an emphatic: no. "'No,' screamed Bärlach, 'no!' you have to get rid of such an individual!" . . . "He screamed once more his hoarse, despondent no and laboriously raised the upper portion of his body." (224)

4. Not to answer is to answer. The chief priests level one charge after another against Christ. When Pontius Pilate asks him: "Have you no answer?"²⁰ None is forthcoming. In Luke's Gospel, Pilate turns Christ over to Herod; as a Galilean, he rightfully belongs within his jurisdiction. "He questioned him at some length, but Jesus gave him no answer. The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him."²¹ The willingness to assume a subservient and precarious position for the sake of a greater good, as Bärlach does in all his evident human frailty, serves as the answer. The Romans routinely used crucifixions to eliminate undesirable members of society, e.g., criminals, slaves. The person to be executed assumed a supine position - the arms outstretched - when being nailed to the *patibulum* or horizontal bar of the cross. "He was nailed down, lying on the ground, his arms extended on the crossbeam. . . ."²² No exception would have been made with Christ's body. On the contrary. Though the link between the police inspector and Christ should not be overstated, neither should it be overlooked. Both Emmenberger (253) and Gulliver (260, 263) repeatedly remind Bärlach of his professed Christianity. Nevertheless beyond the Biblical rhetoric, a simple truth remains: why do we experience such difficulty believing someone who, while repeatedly and forcefully proclaiming that he loves his family, spends every free moment on the golf course? Though his exact words may have differed somewhat, all of us can easily recall the aphorism attributed to Ralph Waldo Emerson. "What you do speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say."²³ From this novel's first page, we realize that despite his flagrant eccentricities - while hospitalized and critically ill, he indulges in some vodka - (148-149) and his gross miscalculations, Bärlach exemplifies a man of infinite courage. He does what

he does because he believes. When Gulliver rescues his cherished friend, he says as much: “‘Here I find you once more, you sad knight, fearless and beyond reproach, you, who set out to do battle against the forces of evil with the power of your spirit. . . .’” (259)

Bärlach ceases all verbal accusations; however, his posture of condemnation remains the same. Nevertheless, can Emmenberger’s response to this grimmest of accounts be accurately ascertained? Methods of deflecting criticism, of denying culpability, of blocking out the evidence are legion. In his all-consuming, his blind, his brazen self-righteousness, Emmenberger does not practice some of the most obvious techniques in the attempt to exonerate himself. He does not deny his actions nor does he interpret them away: not what you think happened, but something else did.²⁴ On the contrary. Rather than lie, he adds significant details concerning his most recent murder to those the authorities already know. (246) Nor does he minimize the gravity of his crimes; he justifies them in making the victims responsible for his maltreatment of them. This deft reapportionment of responsibility can be called “scapegoating” and that chapter abounds in such examples. At this juncture, such scapegoating serves as a repudiation of the victim.²⁵ As Stanley Cohen surmises in his *States of Denial*: “This is not situational cruelty. To be co-operative perpetrators . . . requires a sense of the world in which the others’ presence is hardly recognized. They get what they deserve, not because of what they do, but because of who they are.”²⁶

Ever the perfectionist - even if a diabolical one - Emmenberger does not stop with these tactics, does not curtail his frantic attempts to remove himself from the realm of the culpable. Moderation, limits of any type, in any sphere never did suit his purposes. He is driven to pursue his fatal dream or, more accurately, his nightmare. For instance, he does not deny the legitimacy of a moral code. He categorically denies its legitimacy for him. To appropriate Cohen’s terminology, Emmenberger displays a moral indifference, such as that extant in “radical and consistent repudiations of conventional moral codes. *Radical* means not a psychotic denial of the existence of such codes (‘I didn’t know that rape was wrong’) but an ideological denial of their moral legitimacy.”²⁷ In a crescendo riddled by taunts, the Swiss physician endeavours to justify setting himself above and beyond the moral norm, outside its restrictive confines, according to his skewed viewpoint. He articulates not only his motivation for doing so, but also his anticipated reward.

“I dared to be myself and nothing else; I devoted myself to that which liberated me, murder and torture; . . . when I situate myself beyond all human norms, which our

weakness erected, then I am free, I evolve into nothing but a moment in time, but what a moment!" (252)

Before relegating this climactic excerpt from Emmenberger's diatribe to the past, two of its aspects invite elucidation. He claims that it is only our weakness that creates the necessity for a moral order; in other words, precepts of appropriate conduct vis-à-vis others as well as ourselves protect first and foremost those who anticipate needing protection and who would otherwise fail to protect themselves. Adolf Hitler proclaims something eerily similar in a passage cited in an earlier chapter from his *Mein Kampf*: "A stronger race will dispel the weak, because the survival instinct in its ultimate form will repeatedly tear asunder the ludicrous shackles of a so-called humanity . . . in order to allow the humanity of nature to assume its place, which destroys weakness, in order to yield its place to strength."²⁸ The pact that Goethe's Faust makes with the devil has assumed iconic status. Mephistopheles can claim Faust's soul, if and when the scholar finds a moment, any moment at all, so captivating that he is willing to offer his soul in exchange. With these words Faust issues his challenge:

"Were I to say to the moment:
By all means tarry awhile! You are so beautiful!
Then you may bind me in shackles,
Then I will gladly face destruction!"²⁹

For a moment of greatest intensity, of greatest lawlessness, Emmenberger does indeed forfeit his soul. Unfortunately too many victims also pay the price.

Just as Bärlach finally recognizes the implacable nature of his adversary, Emmenberger acknowledges the nature of his enemy. Though Bärlach had long since ceased his verbal attacks, Emmenberger betrays his sense of culpability for one last reason. He removes himself from the field of battle. He does so even before leaving Bärlach's presence. Stanley Cohen rather accurately describes this type of disassociation, this manner of absenting the self from assuming appropriate responsibility for an atrocity. "The self denies its very presence by becoming a spectator. People in a car accident often recall feeling that this was happening to someone else - 'it was like watching a movie'. . . . There are some perpetrators who care so little, whose sense of personal responsibility has so atrophied, that they act like bystanders who just happen to come across something."³⁰ Cohen further distinguishes this phenomenon from "a state of mindless social conformity."³¹ The two psychic responses in the face of violence should not be confused. From his self-accusations, it is obvious that Emmenberger does

not belong to that group of individuals who do not grasp the seriousness of their actions. "The more frightening possibility is that they really saw nothing wrong at the time and behaved, like everyone else, without reflection."³² He realizes the seriousness of his sins, even as he commits them. He never disavows their sinister nature. On the contrary, he extols his diabolical practices.

Emmenberger absents himself in quite another way. He becomes a spectator in his own life, in regard to his self. He disassociates himself from himself. He compartmentalizes to an extreme. "I have reached a point from which I deal with myself as though I were a stranger." (254-255) Just as he decided over life and death in the camps and now does in the hospital, just as he assumed the role normally reserved for God, he decides over his own fate. "I destroy myself; I save myself." (255) He also exhibits at least two of the characteristics inherent in the dissociative defence mechanism: an "unwarranted sense of superiority" and "a devil-may-care attitude."³³ He testifies to both when maintaining: "'It makes no difference,' he said, 'what I do; to attain a more powerful position is impossible. . . .'" (255) At least in his own mind, he also succeeds in transforming the gravity of ultimate damnation into something inconsequential, into something playful, risible.³⁴ In the concluding moments of his devastating diatribe, Emmenberger states: "'Nothing will amuse me more than to witness my descent into hell.'" (255) No wonder Bärlach stops speaking.

There's no point in trying to reach someone, who is no longer there. Humour or its anticipation may function as the ultimate distancing technique. Only when the person who at the moment feels no fear (at least on the conscious level), no sense of responsibility for he has already extricated himself from a given situation, which can engender both, only then can that individual resort to amusement.³⁵ If Emmenberger perceived the situation in which he finds himself as totally non-threatening, as totally innocuous, would he even attempt to remove himself from its hazards? Paradoxically enough, Emmenberger testifies to his belief in the enduring exigencies of the norms he is violating by attempting to remove himself from their relentless grasp. Although he doesn't want to hear it, like all of us, he stands at the threshold Helmuth Plessner describes:

. . . between the serious and the non-serious, between sense and nonsense and simultaneously before the possibility of its irreconcilable, multi-faceted, contradictory connection, with which he cannot cope, from which he must disengage and which at the same time continues to engage him.³⁶

Since he cannot resolve the dichotomy between the universal moral norms and his violations thereof, he must accept that same dichotomy. To neutralize this tension, he refuses to accord this inherent polarity its proper due. "We do it, we accept it, but we leave it to its own devices: we do not take it seriously."³⁷

In other words, even the most fundamental, the most cogent argument cannot persuade the individual who absents himself, who doesn't take himself seriously, who does not even care about his own well-being, let alone anyone else's.

Notes

1. M[organ] Scott Peck, *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1983, p. 77.
2. George E. Vaillant, *The Wisdom of the Ego*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, London, 1993, p. 44.
3. Ibid., p. 18.
4. Peck, p. 77.
5. *The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version. Catholic Edition*, 1 Corinthians 13:12, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999.
6. Peck, p. 70.
7. Ibid., p. 76.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid., p. 71.
10. Ibid., p. 72.
11. J. E. Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, Jack Sage (trans), Philosophical Library, New York, 1972, p. 233. See also: Johannes Hehn, *Siebenzahl und Sabbat bei den Babyloniern und im Alten Testament: Eine religionsgeschichtliche Studie*, J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, Leipzig, 1907, rpt. Leipziger Semitistische Studien, Band II, Heft 5, Zentralantiquariat der DDR, Leipzig, 1968, p. 17.
12. Franz Carl Endres and Annemarie Schimmel, *Das Mysterium der Zahl: Zahlensymbolik im Kulturvergleich*, Eugen Diederichs Verlag, München, 1988, 4th edn., p. 143. See also: Gotthard G[isbert] G. Reinhold (ed), *Die Zahl Sieben im Alten Orient: Studien zur Zahlensymbolik in der Bibel, The Number Seven in the Ancient Near East: Studies on the Numerical Symbolism in the Bible and Its Ancient Near Eastern Environment*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt, 2008.
13. Ibid., p. 145.
14. Ibid., p. 146.
15. Catholic Church, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1994, p. 457.

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16. Ibid., p. 450.
 17. Ibid., p. 289; see also: Endres, p. 150.
 18. Endres, p. 150.
 19. Ibid., p. 148.
 20. *The Holy Bible*, Mark 15: 4.
 21. Ibid., Luke 23: 9-10.
 22. Jean-Marc Varaut, *Le Procès de Jésus Crucifié sous Ponce Pilate*, Plon, [Paris], 1997, p. 103.
 23. Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Letters and Social Aims*, James R. Osgood, Boston, 1876, p. 86. "What you *are* stands over you the while, and thunders so that I cannot hear what you say to the contrary."
 24. Stanley Cohen, *States of Denial: Knowing about Atrocities and Suffering*, 2001, Polity Press, Cambridge, UK, 2002, p. 103.
 25. Ibid., p. 96.
 26. Ibid., p. 97.
 27. Ibid., p. 98.
 28. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, Zentralverlag der NSDAP, München, 1942, p. 145. See also: Book One, Chapter One, note 25.
 29. [Johann Wolfgang von] Goethe, *Faust: Eine Tragödie [1808]*, Karl Heinrich Hücke (ed), Aschendorff, Münster, 2008, p. 69.
 30. Cohen, p. 100.
 31. Ibid.
 32. Ibid.
 33. Vaillant, p. 56.
 34. Ibid., p. 57.
 35. John Morreall, *Taking Laughter Seriously*, State University of New York, Albany, 1983, p. 104.
 36. Helmuth Plessner, 'Lachen und Weinen. Eine Untersuchung der Grenzen menschlichen Verhaltens (1941),' *Gesammelte Schriften, VII, Ausdruck und menschliche Natur*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt, 1982, p. 299.
 37. Ibid., p. 118.

Book Two

Oscar Wilde
The Picture of Dorian Gray

Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Donald L. Lawler (ed), Norton, New York, 1988. All quotes and paraphrases followed by page references and referring to this novel are taken from the above-mentioned edition.

Chapter One: Victimization

Thus you will know them by their fruits.

How could the opening paragraphs of two novels be more dissimilar? Dürrenmatt's *Der Verdacht* begins in the dead of winter during the last days of 1948. The aging police detective, Hans Bärlach, though he survives a heart attack, has just been informed that due to a malignancy his days are numbered. And yet despite his thoroughly weakened physical condition, the first page of the novel finds Bärlach leafing through a 1945 issue of *Life*. Paradoxically, a photograph depicting certain death captures his attention and reawakens his indefatigable sense of justice, of outrage: an operation performed without the benefit of anaesthesia in the concentration camp at Stutthof. It is Monday, the first day of the workweek, and Bärlach readies himself to tackle this manifestation of evil. Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* evokes an undeniably contrasting perambulatory note. The height of the summer in all its intoxication of the senses, in all its abundance of colour, fragrance and sound washes over these initial pages and suffuses their every detail. Members of the Victorian era's leisure class languish about:

From the corner of the divan of Persian saddlebags on which he was lying, smoking, as was his custom, innumerable cigarettes, Lord Henry Wotton, could catch the gleam of the honey-sweet and honey-coloured blossoms of a laburnum, whose tremulous branches seemed hardly able to bear the burden of a beauty so flame-like as theirs. . . . (7)

Or they admire their artistry, the product of that same leisure. Basil Hallward, Wotton's friend and a painter of considerable reputation, derives keen pleasure from studying his most recent creation: "the full-length portrait of a young man of extraordinary personal beauty." (7) Wotton and Hallward, as well as Dorian Gray, are introduced within an ambience of gentility, splendour, opulence, of nature at its richest, of privileged youth at its most promising, and of time to spare. Infinite amounts of unstructured time. Dürrenmatt shows us a reprehensible image, an unequivocal illustration of evil on his first page, but who could predict an analogous result after reading Oscar Wilde's initial, idyllic utterances?

Sometimes evil is not where we would expect to find it. Yet when asking whether Dorian ultimately exhibits all eight of the characteristics, which classified Fritz Emmenberger as evil, the answer will be an unqualified: yes.

Once before, Peck reminded us: "If one wants to seek out evil people, the simplest way to do so is to trace them from their victims."¹ During adulthood, Dorian Gray victimized five major figures: Sibyl Vane, Basil Hallward, Alan Campbell and James Vane. And, of course, Dorian himself.

Dorian is only twenty (32, 62), when he finds himself attracted to and contemplating marriage with the even younger Sibyl Vane; she is a mere seventeen. (44, 55, 58) Though both could be forgiven for mistaking this episode of infatuation for love, once Dorian tires of Sibyl, his mistreatment of her reveals a hard and inconsiderate nature. His relationship with the novice actress prior to their engagement is as intense as it is brief: a mere three weeks. Dorian's disenchantment proceeds even more rapidly; in fact there is no comparison. One evening, a short time after their engagement is announced, Lord Henry, Basil and Dorian frequent the theatre to watch Sibyl playing the role of Juliet. And though withholding their final assessment until after the crucial balcony scene, when Dorian's friends pass judgment, their decision proves devastating.

She looked charming as she came out in the moonlight. That could not be denied. But the staginess of her acting was unbearable, and grew worse as she went on. . . . She over-emphasized everything that she had to say. The beautiful passage . . . was declaimed with the painful precision of a school-girl who has been taught to recite by some second-rate professor of elocution. When she leaned over the balcony . . . she spoke the words as though they conveyed no meaning to her. It was not nervousness. Indeed, so far from being nervous, she was absolutely self-contained. It was simply bad art. She was a complete failure. (67-68)

Dorian notes the disappointment of Henry as well as Basil, and though both in some measure attempt to soften their critique, the visibly shattered Dorian refuses all their entreaties. At the play's conclusion, Sibyl herself endeavours to explain the reasons behind her seriously altered performance. He pays no attention and utterly fails to realize how much joy she radiates. No matter what she says or does, he registers only his acute displeasure over and over again. "He shrugged his shoulders. 'You are ill, I suppose. When you are ill you shouldn't act. You make yourself ridiculous. My friends were bored. I was bored.'" (69) And once more.

“Yes,” he cried, “you have killed my love. You used to stir my imagination. Now you don’t even stir my curiosity. You simply produce no effect. I loved you because you were marvellous. . . . You have thrown it all away. You are shallow and stupid. My God! How mad I was to love you! What a fool I have been! You are nothing to me now. . . . I wish I had never laid eyes upon you! You have spoiled the romance of my life. . . . What are you now? A third-rate actress with a pretty face.” (70)

When she finally understands his point of view, his devastation, her searing pain finds its voice in supplications and promises. But Dorian will not be moved.

There is always something ridiculous about the emotions of people whom one has ceased to love. Sibyl Vane seemed to him absurdly melodramatic. Her tears and sobs annoyed him. “I am going,” he said at last in his calm, clear voice. “I don’t wish to be unkind, but I can’t see you again. You have disappointed me.” She wept silently, and made no answer, but crept nearer. Her little hands stretched blindly out, and appeared to be seeking for him. He turned his heel, and left the room. (71)

The afternoon of the next day, he briefly recants his decision (76-77), but by then it is too late. Sibyl Vane takes her own life. (78) Upon hearing the news from the lips of Lord Henry, he temporarily regrets his cruelty, only to change his mind again and revert to his original disdain. He dismisses her death with a facile conclusion: “It has been a marvellous experience. That is all. I wonder if life has still in store for me anything as marvellous.” (82)

At one point, but only temporarily, Dorian seems to acknowledge his role in Sibyl’s suicide: “‘So I have murdered Sibyl Vane,’ said Dorian Gray, half to himself - ‘murdered her as surely as if I had cut her little throat with a knife.’” (78) And yet that sentiment seems so fleeting, so shallow. And, of course, it becomes thoroughly convenient to disavow any responsibility for her premature death, for indeed, it was her hand that ended her life. Undoubtedly both shared in the irrevocable act. Her impulsiveness, her naiveté, her desperation do not cancel out his blatant indifference.

Sibyl Vane may be the first of Dorian Gray’s victims. But she is clearly not the last. We observe his progression or, more accurately, regression between the ages of twenty and thirty-eight. On the evening before his thirty-eighth birthday, the creator of Dorian’s portrait insists on

visiting him. Though intending to leave for France within the hour or so, Basil Hallward desires a last word with Dorian. The artist considers him a close friend and, consequently, wishes to hold him in high regard. During what is literally their final exchange, Basil comes to the point quickly and tells Dorian, despite the latter's voiced disinclination to listen, that his reputation has suffered enormously in London society. (116) To underscore the seriousness of these allegations, though he finds them difficult to believe, Hallward begins to elucidate the particulars.

“Why is it, Dorian, that a man like the Duke of Berwick leaves the room of a club when you enter it? Why is it that so many gentlemen in London will neither go to your house nor invite you to theirs? You used to be a friend of Lord Staveley.” (117)

Basil imparts Staveley's damning criticism of Dorian and continues in his forthright manner.

“Why is your friendship so fatal to young men? There was that wretched boy in the Guards who committed suicide. You were his great friend. There was Sir Henry Ashton, who had to leave England, with a tarnished name. You and he were inseparable. What about Adrian Singleton, and his dreadful end? What about Lord Kent's only son, and his career? I met his father yesterday in St. James's Street. He seemed broken with shame and sorrow. What about the young Duke of Perth? What sort of life has he got now? What gentleman would associate with him?” (117, 144-146)

As before Dorian denies his contribution to these tragedies and yet Basil Hallward will not be deterred and adds the name of Lord Henry's sister, Lady Gwendolen, as well as the now deceased wife of Lord Gloucester, to this extensive accounting. (118-119) Though initially not intending to do so, Basil ultimately admonishes the friend for whom he fears and in so doing summarizes Dorian's deleterious effect. ““You have a wonderful influence. Let it be for good, not for evil. They say that you corrupt every one with whom you become intimate, and that it is quite sufficient for you to enter a house, for shame of some kind to follow after.”” (118-119)

How can Dorian leave unchallenged such a sombre ledger? He can't. And insists on showing Hallward how accurate those assumptions are. Dorian forces the well-meaning and incredulous Basil to see for himself the

record of his soul-life, the portrait the gifted artist crafted almost two decades earlier. As Gray watches his friend recoil in horror,

. . . suddenly an uncontrollable feeling of hatred for Basil Hallward came over him, as though it had been suggested to him by the image of the canvas, whispered into his ear by those grinning lips. The mad passions of a hunted animal stirred within him, and he loathed the man who was seated at the table, more than in his whole life he had ever loathed anything. (123)

Dorian takes a knife and slowly and deliberately stabs the painter to death. (123)

In attempting to obliterate the evidence of his murderous act, the nobleman adds another victim to this ignominious list. His name is Alan Campbell. Estranged for some years, though formerly good friends, (129) Dorian sends for Campbell the morning after the murder. As the young man excels in chemistry, Dorian asks him to destroy Basil Hallward's remains. "You, Alan, you must change him, and everything that belongs to him, into a handful of ashes that I may scatter in the air." (130-131) Campbell had intended never again to cross his former friend's threshold, let alone accede to any of his requests; consequently he refuses, despite Dorian's relentless demands. But Dorian must have his way and when Alan rebuffs one entreaty after another, Dorian threatens him with blackmail. We never learn the name of the potential recipient nor the exact contents of the letter Dorian promises to send, if Alan does not comply. It doesn't matter. "As he read it, his face became ghastly pale, and he fell back in his chair. A horrible sense of sickness came over him. He felt as if his heart was beating itself to death in some empty hollow." (132) Dorian achieves his end.

A groan broke from Campbell's lips, and he shivered all over. The ticking of the clock on the mantelpiece seemed to him to be dividing Time into separate atoms of agony, each of which was too terrible to be borne. He felt as if an iron ring was slowly tightened around his forehead, as if the disgrace with which he was threatened had already come upon him. The hand upon his shoulder weighed like a hand of lead. It was intolerable. It seemed to crush him. (132-133)

Measured by any standard, Alan's disinclination to accede to Dorian's wishes qualifies as extreme, and yet he ultimately does so. (135)

Consequently it is not surprising to learn that within six weeks, Alan Campbell commits suicide. (161, 168) As in the case of Sibyl Vane and all the other victims, Dorian also contributes to this sequence of events, despite his total disavowal: "As for Alan Campbell, his suicide had been his own act. He had chosen to do it. It was nothing to him." (168) Nevertheless Dorian's imprint can be found everywhere.

But before hearing of this last death, Dorian plays a key role in yet a third one. Throughout the past eighteen years, Sibyl's older brother, James Vane, never relents in his efforts to avenge his sister's suicide. As in her romantic fervour, she never told anyone Dorian's given name, but only referred to him as Prince Charming, (54, 56, 57, 87) James encounters considerable difficulty in tracing Dorian's whereabouts. A seemingly unwitting remark made in a particularly disreputable bar/opium den alerts Sibyl's brother to Dorian's presence; James follows him into the street with every intention of killing him. About to pull the trigger, Dorian's boyish face assures Vane that this could not be the identical man, who wronged his sister almost two decades ago. Overcome at the thought of the error he almost committed, James retreats. Another victim, a woman, whom Dorian disgraced almost eighteen years ago, witnesses the scene and subsequently tells James Vane he was a fool not to have killed his adversary: "'He is the worst one that comes here. They say he has sold himself to the devil for a pretty face.'" (148) Somewhat reluctantly, he finally does believe her. A scant week later, James Vane locates Dorian at his country estate: Selby Royal.

There was a wild recklessness of gaiety in his manner as he sat at the table, but now and then a thrill of terror ran through him when he remembered that, pressed against the window of the conservatory, like a white handkerchief, he had seen the face of James Vane watching him. (152-153)

Only three days subsequent, James is killed. Had Gray not harmed his sister, had James Vane not continued his pursuit of vengeance - again both parties share in the blame - he would not have found himself among the beaters at a shooting-party and Sir Geoffrey would presumably have shot only the rabbit. (153-154, 159)

But Dorian Gray could not have died at the hands of James Vane. That task he would have to perform himself. How could it be otherwise? He has victimized himself psychologically for the novel's duration and consequently he becomes his final victim also physically. Dorian finally attains that hardness of heart, characteristic of any evil individual. While

contemplating his seriously flawed portrait, he asks himself over and over whether he should confess to the murder of Basil Hallward.

There was blood on the painted feet, as though the thing had dripped - blood even on the hand that had not held the knife. Confess? Did it mean that he was to confess? To give himself up and be put to death? He laughed. He felt that the idea was monstrous. Besides, even if he did confess, who would believe him? There was no trace of the murdered man anywhere. (168-169)

And again. "Yet it was his duty to confess, to suffer public shame, and to make public atonement. There was a God who called upon men to tell their sins to earth as well as to heaven. Nothing that he could do would cleanse him till he had told his own sin. His sin? He shrugged his shoulders." (169) And once more. "Was he always to be burdened by his past? Was he really to confess?" (169) His reply is as simple as it is damning: "Never." (169)

And he doesn't confess, doesn't admit even to himself that what he did was only seemingly in his best interest, did not contribute to his development as a self-actualized individual, proved wrong for him as well as others. How could he begin that process now? For almost twenty years, Dorian had always made his choices on the basis of pleasure, of expediency. How could his motivation differ at this juncture? As Erich Fromm observes: "The longer we continue to make the wrong decisions, the more our heart hardens; the more often we make the right decision, the more our heart softens - or better perhaps, becomes alive."² To change now would seem illogical, unfamiliar, inconceivable. How could he move from his ingrained position? He can't leave his self-inflicted damnation.

Hell is essentially a state of being which we fashion ourselves: a state of final separateness from God . . . which is eternal precisely because it has become, in itself, immovable. There are analogies in human experience: . . . the inertia . . . which has so taken possession of the personality that no crisis, no appeal, no inducement whatsoever, can stir it into activity, but on the contrary makes it bury itself the more deeply into its immobility. So with the soul and God . . . the inertia that cannot be troubled to repent, even though it sees the abyss into which the soul is falling, because for so long, in little ways perhaps, it has accustomed itself to refuse whatever might cost it an effort.³

The legatee of inordinate wealth, good looks and an over-abundance of leisure, Dorian Gray is not used to and has never been used to a life of effort.

In his final act of denying his culpability, he assaults the symbol of his conscience.

He looked round, and saw the knife that had stabbed Basil Hallward. He had cleaned it many times, till there was no stain left upon it. . . . As it had killed the painter, so it would kill the painter's work, and all that that meant. . . . It would kill this monstrous soul-life, and without its hideous warnings, he would be at peace. He seized the thing and stabbed the picture with it. (169)

And thus stabs himself. Aroused from their sleep by an agonizing scream, the servants ultimately discover on the floor of the old schoolroom "a dead man, in evening dress, with a knife in his heart. He was withered, wrinkled, and loathsome of visage. It was not till they had examined the rings that they recognized who it was." (170)

Dorian's final attempt to eradicate the evidence of his misdeeds invariably reminds one of Peck's observations. Paradoxically, it is not evil deeds which make for evil persons; it is their failure to acknowledge them.

I think they have an unacknowledged sense of their own evil nature. Indeed, it is the very sense from which they are frantically trying to flee. The essential component of evil is not the absence of sin or imperfection but the unwillingness to tolerate that sense. At one and same time, the evil are aware of their evil and desperately trying to avoid the awareness. . . . Evil originates not in the absence of guilt but in the effort to escape it.⁴

Frantically trying to flee, unwillingness to tolerate, desperately trying to avoid, the effort to escape: do all of these manifestations not characterize Dorian's final and fatal gesture? Dorian looks at the portrait of his lost days and cannot abide the reminder of their waste, their horror one minute longer. He knows the source of the problem; it lies in his conscience, in his guilt. The knife is after all plunged into his heart. Rather than begin the arduous process of reversing course, he chooses to obliterate the evidence of his sin. And thus obliterates himself. Evil is the ultimate victimizer; evil kills. Evil kills the self.

We all hurt others, sometimes deliberately, but more often than not inadvertently. We say or do the wrong thing. Sometimes we realize our

mistake immediately, sometimes only much later, and sometimes not at all. Most of us will attempt to mend our ways, make restitution, if possible, and resolve to be more sensitive to others' legitimate concerns. We console ourselves in recalling Scott Peck's observation: a single evil act does not an evil person make.⁵ Yet he maintains what renders individuals evil is the "persistence and consistency of their sins."⁶ Or to phrase it another way: they lack a self-correcting mechanism.

When perusing the roster of Dorian Gray's transgressions, we can easily witness not only their escalating frequency, but also their increasing severity. Alan Campbell synthesizes both these aspects of his former friend's undeniable progression or, more accurately, regression for his victimizer: "You have gone from corruption to corruption, and now you have culminated in crime." (133) Except for some moments of half-hearted and consequently questionable remorse (76, 77, 160), Dorian mistreats, coerces, demeans, and violates virtually all with whom he comes into contact. He does not consider the needs of others before or even alongside his own; he does not attempt to empathize with others, does not encourage or ennoble them. Without a doubt his effects upon those within his purview qualify as relentlessly negative. His predominant behavioural patterns recall that familiar and yet perhaps long forgotten Biblical admonition:

"You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. . . . Thus you will know them by their fruits."⁷

In other words, Dorian thinks only of himself, has only his self-interest in mind. And yet, upon further reflection, he does not. Therein lies the paradox of evil. In annihilating others, he succeeds in annihilating himself.

Notes

1. M[organ] Scott Peck, *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1983, p. 107.
2. Erich Fromm, *The Heart of Man: Its Genius for Good and Evil*, 1964, Harper, New York, 1987, p. 135.
3. Gerald Vann, *The Pain of Christ and the Sorrow of God*, 1947, Templegate, Springfield, IL, 1954, pp. 54-55.
4. Peck, p. 76.
5. Ibid., pp. 70-71.
6. Ibid., p. 69.

7. *The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition*, Matthew 7:16-20, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999.

Chapters Two and Three: Failure to Respect the Autonomy of Others and Their Depersonalization

There are boundaries to the individual soul.

Fusing the *second* and *third* characteristics of evil persons: failure to respect the autonomy of others and its frequent result, their depersonalization, let us examine the situations of three of Dorian Gray's major victims: Sybil Vane, Basil Hallward and Alan Campbell.

Whether speaking of Sibyl Vane before or after her disastrous performance, Dorian only focuses on the roles she plays on stage or in his life and never on who she is. For instance, when Lord Henry invites Dorian to join him for dinner, he refuses his overture in reminding Henry that this evening Sibyl will be assuming the role of Imogen and tomorrow that of Juliet. Henry quickly asks: "When is she Sibyl Vane?" And Dorian replies: "Never." (47) While conversing with both Basil and Lord Henry the next evening, he continues in the same vein: "Lips that Shakespeare taught to speak have whispered their secret in my ear. I have had the arms of Rosalind around me, and kissed Juliet on the mouth." (62)

Once she acts badly, he frames his disappointment by enumerating all that she had done for him, but obviously in his eyes does no longer. His words he does not mince. He places the entire blame for the relationship's failure on her and begins virtually every sentence with: you. "You used to stir my imagination. Now you don't even stir my curiosity. You simply produce no effect." (70) He openly admits that he loved her because of all she could do for him. "I loved you because you were marvellous, because you had genius and intellect, because you realized the dreams of great poets and gave shape and substance to the shadows of art." (70) This one-sided ranting continues like hammer blows for some moments. "You have spoiled the romance of my life. . . . Without your art you are nothing." (70) Finally she understands that he means every word and has rendered her abasement complete.

Not once during this incessant volley of insults - as she attempts to explain why she acted as she did, why her craft no longer means anything to her, how her perceived love for Dorian has pre-empted every other consideration - does he deign to listen, let alone endeavour to comprehend. (69-70) Even when Sibyl, whom he had supposedly loved and agreed to marry, begs his forgiveness, he does not relent. (71) In acknowledging the autonomy, the separateness of another, in that regard, Dorian Gray represents an absolute failure.

It is then not startling that as Sibyl pleads with him not to leave her, sobbing as she creeps on the floor towards him, he regards her as an object. "She crouched on the floor like a wounded thing. . . ." (71) But even when he was still infatuated with her, still extolling her virtues to Lord Henry and Basil, he reified her. "I cannot understand how any one can wish to shame the thing he loves. I love Sibyl Vane." (63)

Invariably Michel's words from Gide's *The Immoralist* come to the fore. Marceline miscarries. And her husband assesses her deteriorating health in these words: "Sickness had entered Marceline, inhabited her from now on, marked her, stained her. She was used goods."¹ Had Scott Peck observed that marriage, he would not have been surprised that the couple experienced profound difficulties. Perhaps on an intellectual level, Michel recognizes Marceline as an individual separate from himself, but on an emotional, a subconscious level he does not. He lacks empathy. In other words, he lacks "the capacity to feel what *another* is feeling."² The other's emotions, needs, desires, plans do not merit his attention, are not considered. Michel would have been like a member of Peck's therapy group of couples, who when asked to define the purpose and function of their spouses, did so only "in reference to themselves; all of them failed to perceive that their mates might have an existence basically separate from their own. . . ."³ Successful interpersonal relationships, whether these be marital or otherwise, are based upon the recognition, the championing, even the celebration of the other's individuality, their basic aloneness, their unique character.⁴

Or as Scott Peck maintains: "There are boundaries to the individual soul. And in our dealings with each other we generally respect those boundaries. It is characteristic of - and prerequisite for - mental health that our own ego boundaries should be clear and that we should clearly recognize the boundaries of others. We must know where we end and others begin."⁵

In his relationship with Sibyl Vane, Dorian obviously did not recognize, let alone respect, her boundaries. He saw her only as an appendage, how she might fulfil his aspirations, his imaginings.

His treatment of Basil Hallward just before the murder is much the same. Even prior to forcing the painter to look upon the havoc wrecked upon what used to be his masterpiece, Dorian incessantly tries to guide the conversation in the direction he wishes it to go, violating Basil's stated intentions at every opportunity. Dorian begins in attempting to make the artist insecure by criticizing his travel accessories (116) and then suggests by word, tone of voice or demeanour what he would or would not discuss. Throughout the exchange Dorian interjects such phrases as: "And mind you don't talk about anything serious." (116) Or: "What is it all about?" cried Dorian, in his petulant way, flinging himself down on the sofa. 'I hope it is not about myself. I am tired of myself to-night.'" (116) And "'I love scandals

about other people, but scandals about myself don't interest me.” (117) Or he simply expresses outrage that Basil intends to keep him for half an hour. (116) When all of his diversionary tactics ultimately fail, he bluntly tells Basil to cease. ““Stop, Basil. You are talking about things of which you know nothing,” said Dorian Gray biting his lip, and with a note of infinite contempt in his voice. . . .” (118)

When Basil finally sees the desecrated portrait and pleads with Dorian to repent marshalling every persuasive and well-meaning argument at his disposal, the determined nobleman casts aside his final chance with the dismissive words: ““It is too late, Basil. . . .”” (122) And in essence walks away from him as he had done with Sibyl. He deliberately severs the connection Basil attempted so assiduously to establish as well as maintain.

Dorian attains that hardness of heart, which does not yield in the face of even the gravest circumstances. Vann describes it perfectly: “. . . there can be a state of soul against which Love itself is powerless because it has hardened itself against Love. . . . There are analogies in human experience: the hate which is so blind, so dark, that love only makes it the more violent. . . .”⁶ Dorian is at that point.

Just prior to murdering Basil Hallward, a feeling of profound hatred towards his former friend engulfs him. To state the obvious: hatred and murder in and of themselves are indisputable signs of disregarding another's autonomy. Dorian admits that he despises the man who has just seen the evidence of his transgressions, “more than in his whole life he had ever loathed anything.” (123) This depersonalization continues once Basil is dead. Twice on that same evening, Dorian refers to Basil as the thing (123, 124). In his rather one-sided exchange with Alan Campbell, multiple examples of reification can be found throughout. ““What you have got to do is to destroy the thing that is upstairs - to destroy it so that not a vestige of it will be left.”” (130) In that uncomplicated sentence alone, three examples can be found. From Dorian's viewpoint, whether noun or pronoun, Basil is reduced to an object. Though many more such examples abound, two additional citations should suffice to prove the point. While the chemist disposes of Basil's remains, Dorian recoils at the sight of his disfigured portrait.

How horrible it was! - more horrible, it seemed to him for the moment, than the silent thing that he knew was stretched across the table, the thing whose grotesque misshapen shadow on the spotted carpet showed him that it had not stirred, but was still there, as he had left it. (134)

Once Campbell leaves Dorian Gray's home, his work completed, Dorian re-enters the old schoolroom. He comments on the noxious smell. "But the thing that had been sitting at the table was gone." (135)

As already intimated in the earlier section concerning Alan Campbell, Dorian also disregards his former friend's autonomy step by lethal step. He sees in Alan only someone who will serve him, who will carry out his designs. This strategy succeeds for two reasons. Due to his past failings, Alan remains in Dorian's debt and he possesses the skills Dorian requires at the moment. Once again Alan becomes but an appendage to Dorian's ego. If that obliterates Alan's humanity in the process, it will not matter to Dorian.

The mere fact that Alan comes to Dorian's home upon his request already constitutes the first step in weakening Alan's position. He had resolved never to frequent Dorian's home again. (130) As with Basil, Dorian uses word, tone and gesture to bend his former friend to his will. The ingratiating preliminaries over, Dorian begins dismantling Alan's reservations in earnest.

After a strained moment of silence, he leaned across and said, very quietly, but watching the effect of each word upon the face of him he had sent for, "Alan, in a locked room at the top of this house . . . a dead man is seated at a table. . . . Don't stir, and don't look at me like that. . . . What you have to do is this - " (130)

Dorian cannot complete the last thought, for Alan asks him to cease speaking. In one manner or another, Alan objects to each and every one of Dorian's statements or outright demands. He calls him a mad man, suspects he occasioned Basil's purported suicide, assures him he will face arrest. (131) How many more ways are there to say: no? But Dorian persists and finds Alan's weakest link; he threatens him with blackmail. (132) Alan succumbs. When he wishes to leave the premises to fetch some necessary items from his laboratory, Dorian refuses to release him. Dorian's valet will bring the required tools. (133) Alan is heartsick; "He was shivering with a kind of ague." (133) That he is fully conscious of his impending degradation only exacerbates the situation. When Dorian admits that he is about to save his life, Alan's reply speaks volumes: "'Your life? Good heavens! What a life that is! You have gone from corruption to corruption, and now you have culminated in crime. In doing what I am going to do, what you force me to do, it is not of your life that I am thinking.'" (133) Within weeks rumours of Alan's suicide begin circulating. (161)

To disregard utterly another's legitimate wishes, to coerce them into betraying their best selves, to so dominate others that they are eviscerated

emotionally and morally - in other words, to use them to further only one's own predilections - that would seem to be synonymous with violating another's autonomy, to depersonalize them, to leave them so impoverished that they become less than human.

Notes

1. André Gide, 'L'Immoraliste,' *Oeuvres Complètes*, L[ouis] Martin-Chauffier (ed), vol. 4, NRF, Paris, 1933, p. 119.
2. M[organ] Scott Peck, *The Road Less Traveled: A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1978, p. 163.
3. Ibid., p. 166.
4. Ibid., pp. 161 and 168.
5. M[organ] Scott Peck, *The People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1983, p. 137.
6. Gerald Vann, *The Pain of Christ and the Sorrow of God*, 1947, Templegate, Springfield, IL, 1954, p. 54.

Chapter Four: Narcissism

. . . I will not serve.

In his *People of the Lie*, Scott Peck attempts to capture the elusive concept of human evil with a series of cogent suggestions, based not only upon years of clinical experience in the field of psychiatry, but also his thorough reading of copious amounts of material. At one point, he makes the following categorical statement: “The essential psychological problem of human evil, I believe, is a particular variety of narcissism.”¹ Narcissism, the *fourth* characteristic, and its related phenomena will now elicit our attention.

At the outset of this discussion some essential distinctions require clarification.

1. As many other psychological definitions, the concept of narcissism has evolved over time. One scholar’s parameters may only tangentially coincide with another’s.

2. Whether reading Sigmund Freud,² Erich Fromm,³ Paul Tillich⁴ or the more recent works of Christopher Lasch,⁵ Rollo May⁶ and Phebe Cramer,⁷ it becomes evident that regardless the particular emphasis of the investigation, the same cardinal elements appear repeatedly. All sources seem to agree that each and every narcissistic person suffers from a fractured relationship between himself and his surroundings. He/she consistently fails to see reality for what it is: an entity unto itself, with its inherent attributes and exigencies. Due to their overweening self-absorption, these individuals consistently regard reality as an extension of themselves. When encountering a given situation, their first questions - they may be asked only subliminally - revolve around: how will this affect me, what am I going to get out of it?

3. This failing underscores another omnipresent and crucial aspect. Their blindness to anything or anyone other than themselves leads to a predictable set of consequences. They lack empathy for others, do not respect their boundaries and frequently depersonalize them. In mentioning depersonalization, one may recall that it occupies the third place on the roster delineating the characteristics of evil persons. And that brings us to perambulatory remark four.

4. Narcissism may serve as an umbrella term encompassing a number of aspects; some have been discussed at length in this volume, others have not. The ensuing investigation intends to demonstrate that narcissistic individuals not only disregard the boundaries of others, while frequently depersonalizing them, as just noted, but in doing so, they also victimize and scapegoat others. In their apparent self-righteousness, they are also not inclined to lend credence to the criticisms of others. This relentless negation reduces reality, cuts it down to size, to their size.

Goethe's Mephistopheles in his *Faust* stated it even more clearly, in total contradiction to his usual practice of speaking obliquely.⁸

"I am the spirit of negation!
And with good reason; because everything that exists
Deserves ruin;
It would be better, were nothing to be created.
Because everything you deem sin,
Destruction, in brief, everything you call evil,
That's my inherent element."⁹

If it does not annihilate it, this overwhelming no distorts reality; consequently, narcissism initiates lying. To phrase it another way, narcissism or pride, in laymen's terms, constitutes the root of the other seven characteristics of evil persons. In the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, pride does, indeed, head the list of the seven deadly sins.¹⁰

James Joyce transposes that particular theological assumption into the literary domain in his *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. The young Stephen Dedalus participates in a four-day retreat and the retreat master speaks to his charges about the origins of Satan.¹¹

"Lucifer, we are told, was a son of the morning, a radiant and mighty angel; yet he fell: he fell and there fell with him a third part of the host of heaven: he fell and was hurled with his rebellious angels into hell. What his sin was we cannot say. Theologians consider that it was the sin of pride, the sinful thought conceived in an instant: *non serviam: I will not serve*. That instant was his ruin. He offended the majesty of God by the sinful thought of one instant and God cast him out of heaven into hell for ever."¹²

These seven capital sins are so designated for all of them "engender other sins."¹³ From a strictly psychological viewpoint, each of them can become addictive, subsuming the entire personality in its wake. Or to make matters clearer: each of them can kill the life of the soul and, if left to its own devices, frequently also the body.

5. Narcissism should never be equated with self-love. On the contrary, the selfish person "is basically not fond of himself, but deeply dislikes himself." Fromm continues:

. . . this seeming contradiction is easy to solve. Selfishness is rooted in this very lack of fondness for oneself. The

person who is not fond of himself . . . is in constant anxiety concerning his own self. He has not the inner security which can exist only on the basis of genuine fondness and affirmation. He must be concerned about himself, greedy to get everything for himself, since basically he lacks security and satisfaction. The same holds true with the so-called narcissistic person. . . .¹⁴

6. Not all narcissists are evil, though all evil persons are narcissistic. Adopting Erich Fromm's nomenclature, Scott Peck agrees that evil persons suffer from a specific variant called "malignant narcissism."¹⁵ He contends further that "an unsubmitted will" characterizes their brand of self-absorption.¹⁶

When does Dorian Gray exhibit the first signs of narcissistic behaviour, of a will run amok? As all of us, he deserves the benefit of the doubt. Surely we can agree with Erich Fromm and Scott Peck, who both insist "we become evil slowly over time through a long series of choices."¹⁷ Let us then examine the making of choices and Dorian's earliest ones.

In his *The Heart of Man: Its Genius for Good and Evil*, Erich Fromm delineates those elements playing a fundamental role in the decision-making process. He distinguishes between abstract or general knowledge and the internalized awareness of good and evil. The latter "means that the person makes that which he learns his own, by experiencing it, experimenting with himself, observing others and, eventually, gaining a conviction. . . ."¹⁸ Though pivotal, formulating a conviction does not suffice in order to make cogent decisions. One must be aware of one's tendencies, one's characteristic thought processes, in brief, of our usual rationalizations, "which hide the unconscious forces."¹⁹ But even recognition of the subconscious motives proves inadequate. The attempt must be made to envision the probable consequences of our actions.²⁰

Theoretical and personalized knowledge of good and evil, acknowledgement of one's characteristic distortions of reality as well as the consequences of the intended act are all essential components in decision-making. Other factors remain to be included in the equation: just when the choice is made and the actual alternatives among which the individual may choose. In other words, what constitutes the balance of forces acting upon and within the individual at the moment of decision?

Particularly when something goes awry, Erich Fromm suggests that we usually look "at the *last* decision in a chain of events, and not at the first or second ones."²¹ Perhaps we should follow his suggestion and ask: where did this trajectory begin? Were there any early signs of this disastrous

outcome? At an earlier stage, could anything have been done differently to avert it?

In the almost two decades, between the ages of twenty and thirty-eight, Oscar Wilde's *Dorian Gray* makes several major decisions and innumerable secondary ones. His trajectory towards evil can be traced with considerable accuracy, as he slowly comes to epitomize someone who knowingly chooses the wrong over and over again. But rather than look only at his final devastating decisions, for the moment let us focus upon his first and second choices: his wish to remain young forever and have his portrait bear the burden of his sins, as well as his dismissal of Sibyl Vane. Both these moments carry within them the unmistakable seeds of his eventual and irreversible fall from grace.

Dorian's relentless progression begins, as it generally does, innocuously enough. At the height of the summer, the celebrated British artist, Basil Hallward, completes his full-length portrait of the young nobleman. Dorian Gray was an individual "of extraordinary personal beauty." (7) And Hallward's rendering does indeed capture perfectly the lad's "finely-curved scarlet lips, his frank blue eyes, his crisp gold hair. There was something in his face that made one trust him at once. All the candour of youth was there, as well as all youth's passionate purity." (18) How could anything possibly go wrong on such a glorious summer day when the splendour of nature seems to echo the splendour of the human form?

Finally Hallward signs the canvas and Dorian leaves the platform upon which he has been posing. Completely enraptured at seeing his likeness - "as if he had recognized himself for the first time," (25) Dorian says nothing for the longest while. His eventual outburst, however, reveals that Lord Henry Wotton's praise of youth and his utter repudiation of the aging process found a receptive ear.

"How sad it is! I shall grow old, and horrible and dreadful. But this picture will remain always young. It will never be older than this particular day in June.... If it were only the other way! If it were I who was to be always young, and the picture that was to grow old! For that - for that - I would give everything!" (25-26)

Emphasizing his intent, Dorian concludes: "'Yes, there is nothing in the whole world I would not give! I would give my soul for that.'" (26) Lest this wish be attributed merely to the dabbling of an idle mind, he reinforces his desire. Mighty is the young man's displeasure, as he lashes out at the picture's creator.

“I am jealous of the portrait you have painted of me. Why should it keep what I must lose? Every moment that passes takes something from me, and gives something to it. Oh, if it were only the other way! If the picture could change, and I could be always what I am now!” (26)

This fervent wish in all its earnest impetuosity constitutes Dorian Gray’s first major decision. How can he be faulted for desiring eternal youth? Who among us would not wish to remain young forever? Why should such a choice be considered singularly ill advised? For any number of reasons.

1. Dorian completely forgets that to be alive is to change, to grow, to alter and be altered. By its very definition, life is never static. It cannot be so and still be life. To be forever still is to be alive no longer, is to be numbered amongst the dead. Movement, spontaneity, unpredictability, in the physical, the spiritual, in every realm, these are the essence of life.

In rejecting this most fundamental of principles, Dorian sets his pronounced wilfulness in opposition to reality. All healthy, all sane adults, “submit themselves one way or another to something higher than themselves, be it God or truth or love or some other ideal.”²² Or as Scott Peck rephrases it even more transparently: “They believe in what is true rather than what they would like to be true.”²³ In the confrontation between reality and Dorian’s will, it is reality which must be set aside. Even if forcibly. The wise remember that to ignore reality is to do so at their peril.

Elaborating upon the synonymous nature between life, change and their significance for normal individuals, Erich Fromm postulates: “The person who fully loves life is attracted by the process of life and growth in all spheres.”²⁴ In order to emphasize that transitions are part and parcel of this inexorable process, Fromm continues:

He prefers to construct rather than to retain. He is capable of wondering, and he prefers to see something new to the security of finding confirmation of the old. He loves the adventure of living more than he does certainty. His approach to life is functional rather than mechanical. . . . He wants to mold and to influence by love, reason, and by his example; not by force, by cutting things apart, by the bureaucratic manner of administering people as if they were things. He enjoys life and all its manifestations. . . .²⁵

Particularly in light of these last two statements, how revealing it is that a thing - a portrait - occasions Dorian’s resolution, and that his wish begins with the words: “How sad it is!” (25) To state the obvious, it should also be

noted that he forms an attachment not only to an inanimate object, to a picture, but to a picture of himself, a mirror image.

Ovid's Narcissus had done likewise. Leaning over that pristine pool of water in the hopes of slacking his thirst, the comely and scornful lad sees his reflection and falls in love with himself.

Enchanted by the charms which were his own.
Himself the worshipped and the worshipper,
He sought himself and was pursued, wooed, fired
By his own heat of love. Again, again
He tried to kiss the image in the well. . . .²⁶

Tiresias had foretold this turn of events in his enigmatic prophecy, and Nemesis had hastened its fulfilment in hearing a rejected suitor's curse.²⁷

2. Even if one argues that Dorian admits the inevitability of life's inherent changes, he is nevertheless thoroughly reluctant to assume their manifestations. He would prefer that those signs of developing maturity, of choices made, of eventual aging, be borne by the picture, not by himself; let something out there bear those burdens, do not let them encumber him. Though he does acknowledge that ethical choices should be made, he doesn't wish the inevitable signs of life's progression to show, to leave their traces. Or as he himself theorizes: "The life that was to make his soul would mar his body." (25) In brief, Dorian fails to assume the proper degree of ownership, of responsibility and in doing so asks something else to assume these perceived burdens, that perceived negativity. Given these suppositions, he must of necessity create a scapegoat. Erich Neumann summarizes the issues succinctly: "The shadow which stands in contradiction to the values held cannot be accepted as a negative segment of the self and will be projected, in other words, it will be displaced outward and experienced as something out there."²⁸

Dorian locates a scapegoat ever so quickly. In an effort to project his alleged burden elsewhere, the young man assails as well as blames both painter and painting. Having internalized Henry Wotton's values, Dorian questions Basil Hallward's friendship and accuses him of disloyalty: "How long will you like me? Till I have my first wrinkle, I suppose. I know, now, that when one loses one's good looks, whatever they may be, one loses everything." (26) And logically enough he blames his current frame of mind upon the portrait itself. "Your picture has taught me that." (26) Although even Dorian concedes that it was their mutual friend, Henry Wotton, who engendered those thoughts. "'Lord Henry Wotton is perfectly right. Youth is the only thing worth having. When I find that I am growing old, I shall kill myself.'" (26) In his misguided desperation, Dorian extends the range of

those incurring his disfavour and his jealousy and includes not only Basil Hallward, but everything retaining its comeliness forever. (26)

3. The crux of the wish centres only on the person of Dorian Gray. In the course of the nine lines encapsulating the wish, quoted earlier, the first person pronoun occurs no fewer than nine times and its variants, i.e., my and me, an additional three. If narcissism can be defined as “excessive self-absorption” and the subsequent lack of attachment to the world outside the self,²⁹ then indeed Dorian exhibits one of the cardinal symptoms of the burgeoning narcissist. Wilde had already foreshadowed that exclusive focus upon the self in placing Gray’s portrait in “the centre of the room.” (7) Even before the young aesthete entered Hallward’s studio that fateful day, Henry Wotton comments upon Dorian’s striking good looks in dubbing him “a Narcissus.” (9) Wotton could not have selected a more appropriate name. As is well known, Narcissus rejected the advances of all those attracted to him, even the faithful Echo, and consequently Nemesis condemns him to love only himself; she overhears the plea of one scorned. “‘O may he love himself alone,’ he cried, ‘And yet fail in that great love.’”³⁰

4. At the risk of once again stating the obvious, it should be remembered that Dorian Gray desires not only to hold onto something, but above all else to retain his appearance, to exercise whatever the extent of the power at his disposal in doing so. The aesthetic consideration moves to the forefront of his motivations. Much, much later in the novel, he will acknowledge to Henry Wotton the crucial link forged at this early moment between aestheticism and morals: “‘I can’t bear the idea of my soul being hideous.’” (77) An observation of Scott Peck’s, regarding the nature of evil people should be recalled: “The words ‘image,’ ‘appearance,’ and ‘outwardly’ are crucial to understanding the morality of the evil. While they seem to lack any motivation to *be* good, they intensely desire to appear good.”³¹ I would hasten to add that Dorian is not evil at this point, but in throwing his weight so to speak on the side of appearance, he establishes the groundwork for future ill-considered choices.

5. In formulating his wish Dorian emphasizes not what he gives, but what he hopes to receive. He doesn’t wish to do anything, to exercise his talents in the creation of something useful or beautiful or in any way life enhancing.³² In partial ignorance and in total denial of the realities of Dorian’s misspent life, Lord Henry Wotton so aptly praises the thirty-eight-year-old’s indolence, his impotence in the novel’s last pages.

“I am so glad that you have never done anything, never carved a statue, or painted a picture, or produced anything outside of yourself! Life has been your art. You have set yourself to music. Your days are your sonnets.” (165)

Dorian Gray becomes enchanted with his portrait and in doing so he exhibits at least five characteristics of an inappropriate choice: 1. rejection of reality, i.e., his desire to remain as he is, 2. the total reluctance to assume the appropriate outward signs of the choices made; both can be understood as evidence of an unsubmitted will, 3. overweening self-absorption, 4. inordinate attachment to his appearance, and 5. focus on receiving, rather than giving. Within these manifestations, examples of scapegoating and victimization could invariably also be noted.

A month after the first, (48) Dorian Gray makes his second major decision. He terminates his relationship with Sibyl Vane. She is but seventeen (55, 58) and he not quite twenty-one (14, 32) when after a courtship of mere weeks, (42) they become engaged. (51) Infatuated with her and yet convinced that he loves the actress, Dorian invites both Henry and Basil to attend one of her performances. Passionate about him and assuming their attraction to be reciprocal, Sibyl casts off her role of Shakespeare's Juliet and performs badly. Why, she reasons, should she act as though she were in love, when in fact she is in love? (70)

Her fiancé's reaction to the theatrical debacle is as instantaneous as it is ruthless. At the outset of their final encounter, Sibyl not only radiates unadulterated joy, but also attempts to explain the motivations for her poor performance at some length; nevertheless Dorian counters her repeated overtures with one devastating volley after another. Amongst a host of insults, he includes: "You have killed my love. . . ." (70) In total disregard of Sibyl's momentary inability to comprehend his altered behaviour, Dorian starts to leave and makes his way to the greenroom door, while continuing his tirade.

"Yes," he cried, "you have killed my love. You used to stir my imagination. Now you don't even stir my curiosity. You simply produce no effect. I loved you because you were marvellous, because you had genius and intellect, because you realized the dreams of great poets and gave shape and substance to the shadows of art. You have thrown it all away." (70)

Lest Sibyl misconstrue his change of heart even a fraction of a second longer, he persists.

"You are shallow and stupid. My God! How mad I was to love you! What a fool I have been! You are nothing to me now. I will never see you again. I will never think of you. I

will never mention your name. You don't know what you were to me, once. . . . Oh, I can't bear to think of it! I wish I had never laid eyes upon you! You have spoiled the romance of my life. How little you can know of love, if you say it mars your art! Without your art, you are nothing. I would have made you famous, splendid, magnificent. The world would have worshipped you, and you would have borne my name. What are you now? A third-rate actress with a pretty face." (70)

Finally she understands, begins pleading with him, tries to negotiate and, while sobbing, reaches for him. "She wept silently, and made no answer, but crept nearer." (71) At last, he acknowledges her unmistakable anguish and yet he will not be moved. "He turned on his heel, and left the room. In a few moments he was out of the theatre." (71)

An analysis of his verbal exchange with Sibyl may help us interpret the inappropriateness of Dorian's actions. As is characteristic of those who scapegoat, he places the blame for his change of heart onto Sibyl. "'You have killed my love. . . .'" (70) "'You have spoiled the romance of my life.'" (70) Although love relationships thrive on both giving and receiving, even if they don't always succeed, those who love others strive to place their beloved's needs either before or alongside their own. Harry Stack Sullivan reflects upon this particular aspect of a love relationship: "When the satisfaction or the security of another person becomes as significant to one as is one's own satisfaction or security, then the state of love exists."³³ By contrast, Dorian readily admits that he was attracted to Sibyl, because of all she was able to do for him. "'I loved you because you were marvellous, because you had genius and intellect, because you realized the dreams of great poets. . . .'" (70) And when he mentions something he might have done for her, his avowal quickly deteriorates into a benefit accruing to him: "'I would have made you famous, splendid, magnificent. The world would have worshiped you, and you would have borne my name.'" (70) As in Dorian's earlier decision, both scapegoating and self-absorption become apparent, as does the fact that he believes his ego, his self-image, these have been compromised. Now that he has drastically altered his perspective, he feels as though Sibyl played him for a fool. To exacerbate the situation, his closest friends witnessed that denigration, that failure. He fears that in their eyes his appearance has been diminished. Perhaps, he reasons, both Henry and Basil now question his judgment. His attacks upon Sibyl stand in direct proportion to his bruised ego. "Failure wounds our pride, and it is the wounded animal who is vicious."³⁴

Even if the details of Dorian's repudiation of Sibyl are eventually

lost to the vagaries of memory, some aspects more than likely remain imprinted on the mind forever: its vehemence, its cruelty. Though at her age Sibyl may understandably mistake infatuation for love, Dorian's incessant verbal blows nevertheless strike a most vulnerable target. His rejection of her is so complete that recovery would, at least in the immediate future, prove exceedingly difficult. But before she has the opportunity to begin the work of restoring her equilibrium, she commits suicide. (78) Though the reader cannot witness her state of mind just before she takes her life and can therefore not ascertain clearly how much responsibility she herself bears for the decision, that Dorian contributed to her untimely demise requires no further emphasis. From this point forward, Sibyl Vane heads the lengthy list of all those whom Dorian affects adversely.

Victimization presumes that the victimizer separates him- or herself psychologically from the victim and no longer identifies with the other. As Dorian ceases to consider himself attached to Sibyl, he distances himself emotionally and feels he can attack, can debase her at will. He no longer regards her as a human being like himself and, in depersonalizing her, he signals simultaneously his detachment and his superiority. Scott Peck phrases this observation more bluntly. "One manifestation of our narcissism is that we are far more likely to kill that which is different from us than that which resembles us."³⁵ As already stated, Sibyl weeps uncontrollably as Dorian stands above her and she tentatively inches towards him. "She crouched on the floor like a wounded thing, and Dorian Gray, with his beautiful eyes, looked down at her, and his chiselled lips curled in exquisite disdain." (71) Peck indicates more than once in his landmark treatise - *People of the Lie* - that at times it is difficult to gauge how much or if indeed the evil suffer. One observation, however, cannot be denied: "They cause suffering."³⁶

Obviously engagements between seventeen- and twenty-year-olds should not in every instance lead to marriage. Dorian has every right to break off the formal arrangement, if he so chooses. It is the manner in which he severs the relationship, the verbal humiliation of his fiancée in the face of her obvious anguish, which is inexcusable.

Wilde shares that viewpoint, for in the fulfilment of Dorian's wish, the portrait begins to bear the burdens of his sin. There is no mistake.

As he was turning the handle of the door, his eyes fell upon the portrait Basil Hallward had painted of him. He started back as if in surprise. . . . Finally he came back, went over to the picture and examined it. In the dim arrested light that struggled through the cream-colored silk blinds, the face appeared to him to be a little changed. The expression looked different. One would have said that there was a

touch of cruelty in the mouth. (72)

To the five negative characteristics of Dorian's first decision can now be added irrefutable evidence of scapegoating, victimization and the depersonalization of others.

After this problematical beginning, Dorian could have changed course; he was still free to choose otherwise. But as a matter of fact, he does not. The verifiable tendencies revealed at this juncture evolve into a habit and become, if not impossible, harder and harder to break. In the final analysis, he does not and ultimately cannot extricate himself from the pattern initiated so long ago.

As the motivating factor, narcissism stands at the threshold of the eight characteristics of human evil. One could also say that this type of selfishness constitutes the core of the other characteristics. At the outset of Wilde's narrative, the portrait stands in the centre of Basil's studio. (7) Appropriately enough, Wilde opens chapter eleven of twenty - the centre of his novel - with the following: "For years, Dorian Gray could not free himself from the influence of this book. Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that he never sought to free himself from it." (98) The volume elicits Dorian's attention for several reasons. Each and every one underscores Dorian's increasing narcissism. From Paris, Dorian attains nine copies of Henry's gift in bindings of various colours "that they might suit his various moods and changing fancies. . . ." (98) As the front and back covers not only contain, but also constrain, a book, as it were, Dorian's whims enfold or limit the world within the volume's pages. Lest there be any doubt, he readily admits that he completely identifies with the novel's protagonist. Not only a portion thereof, but "the whole book seemed to him to contain the story of his own life, written before he had lived it." (98-99) Though in two regards, his life does differ markedly from that of the novel's French hero. The Parisian quickly forfeits his good looks and in response develops a disdain for anything that could reflect his less than flattering image: "mirrors, and polished metal surfaces, and still water." (99) As Dorian's handsome appearance does not falter with the passing of the years, he does not have cause to exhibit the same aversion. Nevertheless his identification with the novel's themes remains inviolate.

If Dorian Gray were asked to articulate what matters to him the most, his answer would be straightforward; "to him Life itself was the first, the greatest, of the arts, and for it all the other arts seemed to be but a preparation." (100) And his life consists of any mode of thought and of behaviour he deems appropriate simply because he deems it so. No other criterion is required. The instant he tires of something or someone, the attraction fades. For a time, he revels in being a fashion trendsetter, a dandy,

but soon aspires to more. He wishes to enunciate a detailed philosophy, designed to “find in the spiritualizing of the senses its highest realization.” (101) His credo champions the worship of sensations, experience, and passion; simultaneously it embodies the antithesis of sacrifice, asceticism, reason or delayed gratification. Or, for that matter, even the beginnings of consideration for another. Are these not the beliefs that Lord Henry advocates during that first telling encounter in Basil’s studio? They begin and end with the alleged obligation to oneself.

“The aim of life is self-development. To realize one’s nature perfectly - that is what each of us is here for. People are afraid of themselves, nowadays. They have forgotten the highest of all duties, the duty that one owes to one’s self.” (19)

One after another, Dorian samples various belief systems. Roman Catholicism fascinates him for a spell. Though not neglecting its inherent mysteries, he focuses his primary attention on the outer manifestations of certain rituals, e.g., the flowered vestment, the jewelled monstrance, the fragrant censers. Predictably the consummate narcissist concludes his cursory reflections in identifying with that aspect of the faith which reflects a portion of himself: his overwhelming desire to learn about the sins of others. “[H]e used to look with wonder at the black confessionals, and long to sit in the dim shadow of one of them and listen to men and women whispering through the worn grating the true story of their lives.” (103) Subsequently he dabbles in mysticism, antinomianism, Darwinism, each in turn, but never committing to the tenets of one to the exclusion of the others; that decision he feels would diminish his intellectual development. That is not a mistake he wishes to make. All else, but life itself, qualifies as theory. “He felt keenly conscious of how barren all intellectual speculation is when separated from action and experiment.” (103) Only the senses matter, only “the senses, no less than the soul, have their spiritual mysteries to reveal.” (103) To phrase it another way, only he and his whims matter. All else is dross. In the perceptive manner of the artist, Basil Hallward grasps this essential truth about his friend on the day of Dorian’s fateful wish and articulates it plainly: “Dorian’s whims are laws to everybody, except himself.” (19) Nothing changes.

Setting aside intellectual pursuits, he gives himself over with abandon to the realm of perfumes. Among the profusion, he studies ambergris, champak, spikenard and hovenia. Once again neither cost nor the time devoted to such a spurious endeavour come into play. Dorian’s only and self-centred concern can be summarized briefly. He intends to develop a “psychology of perfumes” (104) in an effort to ascertain the relationship

between a particular fragrance and the mood or sense it affects. How does frankincense make an individual mystical? How does musk addle the brain? (103-104) Such questions preoccupy him.

Soon thereafter he devotes himself to music or, more accurately, to the world of sound. The harmonious, classical scores of Beethoven, Schubert or Chopin do not move him; “he used to give curious concerts in which mad gypsies tore wild music from little zithers, or grave yellow-shawled Tunisians plucked at the strained strings of monstrous lutes. . . .” (104) He prefers odd-shaped instruments or Peruvian jars capable of producing shrill notes or “flutes of human bones.” (104) The greater the cacophony, the more remote the cultural origins of these so-called instruments, the greater their eccentricity, the greater the pleasure Dorian gleans from these experiences. The reason for his enraptured response is as simple as it is egocentric.

The fantastic character of these instruments fascinated him, and he felt a curious delight in the thought that Art, like Nature, has her monsters, things of bestial shape and with hideous voices. (105)

He relates most readily to that which resonates with the current state of his psyche; years of dissolute living leave their mark. But even when resuming his interest in traditional music and attending a performance of Wagner’s *Tannhäuser*, Dorian encounters his deteriorated self, “seeing in the prelude to that great work of art a presentation of the tragedy of his own soul.” (105)

Next a preoccupation with jewels commands his time, his money, his attention. He purchases diamonds, sapphires, emeralds, but also pearls, chrysoberyls, cymophanes, peridots, topazes, amethysts, to name just some among the incalculable profusion. Not only their beauty arouses his interest, but also the legends surrounding these jewels. “He would often spend a whole day settling or resettling in their cases the various stones that he had collected. . . .” (105) Needless to say, he could be spending his days in less self-oriented pursuits. Furthermore, this compulsive rearrangement of the precious and semi-precious stones signals Dorian’s hoarding tendencies. Erich Fromm once again points out a significant pathology in the nobleman’s character. “[The hoarder] cannot endure things out of place and will automatically rearrange them. To him the outside world threatens to break into his fortified position; orderliness signifies mastering the world outside by putting it, and keeping it, in its proper place in order to avoid the danger of intrusion.”³⁷ In other words, the jewels serve as a defence mechanism, though Dorian may not realize it.

For some months, he also collects embroideries and tapestries of the most exquisite and select varieties originating in far-flung cultures and exotic locales:

. . . the dainty Delhi muslins, finely wrought with gold-thread palmates, and stitched over with iridescent beetles' wings; the Dacca gauzes, that from their transparency are known in the East as "woven air," and "running water," and "evening dew;" strange figured cloths from Java; elaborate yellow Chinese hangings; books bound in tawny satins . . . veils of *lacis* worked in Hungary point; Sicilian brocades, and stiff Spanish velvets. . . (108)

Even as he admired their artistry, he could not help but realize "the ruin that Time brought on beautiful and wonderful things." (107) Immediately he forges a connection to his own situation. "He, at any rate, had escaped that. Summer followed summer, and the yellow jonquils bloomed and died many times, and nights of horror repeated the story of their shame, but he was unchanged. No winter marred his face or stained his flower-like bloom. How different it was with material things!" (107)

His mania - for it becomes just that - for gathering the expensive as well as the esoteric does not cease with the secular realm; vestments used in the rites of the Roman Catholic Church also exert their fascination upon him.

He possessed a gorgeous cope of crimson silk and gold-thread damask, figured with a repeating pattern of golden pomegranates set in six-petalled formal blossoms, beyond which on either side was the pineapple device wrought in seed-pearls. The orphreys were divided into panels representing scenes from the life of the Virgin, and the coronation of the Virgin was figured in coloured silks upon the hood. This was Italian work of the fifteenth century. (108)

No matter how elaborate or beautiful these collections, how arcane or expensive, whether profane or sacred, in the final analysis, not one of these qualities makes any difference to their owner. Dorian amasses them or indulges in them for a single purpose. These acquisitions serve as "means of forgetfulness, modes by which he could escape, for a season, from the fear that seemed to him at times to be almost too great to be borne." (109) The ever-increasing anxiety that the desecrated portrait may be discovered blinds him to any of the intrinsic facets of his possessions. In other words, he

doesn't see them for what they are, but only as extensions of his emotional needs. Does not Lord Henry's book about the compelling Parisian as well as Dorian's investigations into various philosophies, do they not also serve as extensions of his emotional needs?

Other factors remain to be considered. Some may be more obvious than others. Though the funds at his disposal seem limitless, it is difficult to gloss over the fact that Dorian spends inordinate sums on items designated exclusively for his own use. Just as he spends inordinate amounts of time pursuing his solitary interests. No thought is ever given to meeting the needs of the impoverished. Evidently he follows Lord Henry's advice assiduously. Even before the portrait reaches completion, the older man assures him: "You are too charming to go in for philanthropy, Mr. Gray - far too charming." (18) Given the vastness of his collections, perhaps, he could be persuaded to share them with others? Might he be convinced to direct his efforts to someone other than himself?

A last point. All of the Englishman's concerns revolve around his perception of ideas or experiences or objects: his perceptions, his experiences, his objects. Other than himself, Dorian sees no one. That means that he doesn't see himself for who he is either. He doesn't regard himself as someone who must face his limitations, acknowledge his fear and the reason for his fear and thus begin his journey out of a childish dependence on appropriated ideas, sensations and things and toward a psychological, a mature independence.

Dorian is as narcissistic as an infant. Or as blind as the so-called adult whom Erich Fromm describes at length. A patient predicates his wish for an earlier doctor's appointment not on the urgency of his condition, but rather on the fact that he lives only a short distance from the doctor's office and can therefore come quickly. The physician "as a separate person with his own schedule and needs does not exist."³⁸ The narcissist fails to see him. Such behaviour would strike us as ludicrous (as well as annoying) and not worthy of consideration, if, on another level, its consequences were not so serious, so harmful. Scott Peck describes with his usual precision - one senses his frustration, his outrage - the case of Angela. "Angela could not speak."³⁹ Her mother completely ignores her daughter's wishes and insists that she dye her hair blond, though the eleven-year-old does not find fault with her black locks. Her mother "did not accept the validity of Angela's boundaries. Indeed, the very existence of these boundaries was anathema to her - as was symbolized by her refusal to allow Angela to close her bedroom door."⁴⁰ Though she functioned well in a professional setting, the thirty-year-old woman's inability to forge close and fulfilling relationships with other adults could be directly attributable to her mother's relentless intrusiveness upon her person as a child. In order to preserve her fragile autonomy, her

sense of self, under these trying circumstances, she makes her boundaries excessive. Due to her blatant narcissism, her concomitant failure to see Angela as a discreet entity, her mother lacks the restraint required to see her daughter as another and not a part of herself.

Narcissism, its concomitant myopia, deprives us of the ability to acknowledge the boundaries of others, to champion their characteristics and desires, though they may well differ from ours. The will to further the identity of others, their beliefs, to extol their unique nature, their happiness is called love.⁴¹ John Powell, in his *Unconditional Love*, offers his reflections on this subject, whose definition always remains just beyond our reach. "When I question myself about the place love has in my life, I must therefore ask if there is any person in my life whose growth and happiness is as real or more real to me than my own. If so, love has truly entered my life."⁴² Knowing someone else belongs on our team for the duration, knowing someone wishes us well, the world of love is closed to the narcissist.

These narcissistic persons have many acquaintances but no close friends. They are sexually liberated but they experience no passion. . . . The narcissistic type is often skilled at stocks and bonds, but sooner or later this seems a purposeless game. They usually make very good salaries - sometimes in the millions - but it gives them little satisfaction. . . . They are modern and sophisticated. . . . Most of all, such persons are exceedingly lonely. It seems the only emotions they feel are a mild but permeating depression and a sense of having missed out on the joys of life even though, paradoxically, they have had everything.⁴³

Although Dorian Gray does not make his fortune on the stock market, the parallels with Rollo May's assessment of our misguided age cannot be expunged from the record. Dorian Gray has everything, but stands alone. Much as Jay Gatsby stands alone, despite the fact that he has everything: money, a residence to rival those of the nobility, a social life whose lavishness defies both description and measure, women. Nevertheless, he is the last to acknowledge his inner impoverishment, for he symbolizes loneliness. To emphasize his insight, Rollo May italicizes the conclusion in its entirety. "*The fact that Gatsby would not have recognized it as such makes it all the more telling; it was not for him an emotion which comes and goes but a character state, a state of being.*"⁴⁴ In his narcissism, in his isolation, Dorian does not acknowledge his identical state of being either. Dorian represents the Victorian era, Gatsby the Jazz Age; an ocean separates the two, nevertheless, Dorian prefigures Gatsby.

Before ceasing our reflections on the relationship between narcissism and loneliness, one more example bears mentioning. At the time she came to him for treatment, Scott Peck could not deal with her effectively. Charlene possessed remarkable intellectual gifts: “an IQ that would sink a battleship.”⁴⁵ Yet in an effort to help this patient understand that her self-centeredness and her sweeping disregard of others’ appropriate requests constitute the root of her persistent failures, Peck asks her to articulate the purpose of our lives. As a former catechism instructor, he could assume that she could furnish an answer to his question.

“The purpose of our life is to glorify God.”

“Well?” I asked.

There was a short silence. . . . “I cannot do it. There’s no room for *me* in that. That would be my death,” she said in a quavering voice. Then, with a suddenness that frightened me, what seemed to be her choked-back sobs turned into a roar. “I don’t want to live for God. I will not. I want to live for me. My own sake!”

It was another session in the middle of which Charlene walked out. . . . “Oh, God, she’s so alone,” was all I could whisper.⁴⁶

To say that Dorian shatters the legitimate boundaries of both Basil Hallward and Alan Campbell qualifies as an understatement. Though their fates were described in detail in the sections on victimization, failure to recognize the separateness of others and their depersonalization, they will be discussed further in those sections on the illegitimate use of power, scapegoating, lying and the total inability to handle criticism. Nevertheless, it must be restated at this juncture that Basil’s murder and Alan’s suicide result directly from Dorian’s boundless narcissism. Both Basil and Alan do suffer all the deleterious consequences of Dorian’s crippling attitude. Close contact with malignant narcissists, with those of an unsubmitted will, spells danger, potentially a danger unto death.

Notes

1. M[organ] Scott Peck, *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1983, p. 77.
2. Sigm[und] Freud, ‘Zur Einführung des Narzissimus,’ *Gesammelte Werke*, Werke aus den Jahren, 1913-1917, vol. 10, 1946, 6th edn, Anna Freud et al. (eds), Fischer, Frankfurt, 1973, pp. 137-170.

3. These Fromm texts are listed according to the publication dates of their first editions. Erich Fromm, *Escape from Freedom*, 1941, Henry Holt, New York, 1994, pp. 114-120; 'Selfishness, Self-Love, and Self-Interest,' *Man for Himself: An Inquiry into the Psychology of Ethics*, Rinehart, New York, 1947, pp. 119-141; 'Individual and Social Narcissism,' *The Heart of Man: Its Genius for Good and Evil*, 1964, Harper, New York, 1987, pp. 62-94; 'Aggression and Narcissism,' *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, 1973, Henry Holt, New York, 1992, pp. 227-232.
4. Paul Tillich, 'Courage and Self-affirmation: Spinoza,' *The Courage to Be*, 2nd edn, 1952, Yale Nota Bene, New Haven, CT, 2000, pp. 18-24.
5. Christopher Lasch, 'The Narcissistic Personality of Our Time,' *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in An Age of Diminishing Expectations*, Norton, New York, 1979, pp. 31-51.
6. Rollo May, 'Individualism and Our Age of Narcissism,' *The Cry for Myth*, Norton, New York, 1991, pp. 108-124.
7. Phebe Cramer, 'Defenses and Psychopathology in Adult Community and Student Samples,' *Protecting the Self: Defense Mechanisms in Action*, Guilford, New York, 2006, pp. 223-236. See also: 'Narcissistic Personality Disorder,' *American Psychiatric Association, Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Fifth Edition. Arlington, VA, American Psychiatric Association, 2013, pp. 669-672; Otto Kernberg, *Borderline Conditions and Pathological Narcissism*, Aronson, Northvale, NJ, London, 1989; —, 'Pathological Narcissism and Narcissistic Personality Disorder: Theoretical Background and Diagnostic Classification,' *Aggressivity, Narcissism, and Self-Destructiveness in the Psychotherapeutic Relationship*, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, London, 2004, pp. 45-59; Simon Baron-Cohen, *The Science of Evil: On Empathy and the Origins of Cruelty*, Basic, New York, 2011, pp. 88-94; M[organ], Scott Peck, 'For the Friction: Marriage and Narcissism,' *A World Waiting To Be Born: Civility Rediscovered*, Bantam, New York, 1993, pp. 95-114.
8. Peck, *People of the Lie*, p. 179.
9. [Johann Wolfgang von] Goethe, *Faust: Eine Tragödie [1808]*, Karl Heinrich Hücke (ed), Aschendorff, Münster, 2008, pp. 57-58; Peck, p. 204.
10. Catholic Church, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1994, p. 457; *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* does not contain such a roster. For some cogent meditations on these issues, consider:

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- Gerald Vann, *The Pain of Christ and the Sorrow of God*, 1947, Templegate, Springfield, IL, 1954, p. 55; Lawrence S. Cunningham, *The Seven Deadly Sins: A Visitor's Guide*, Ave Maria Press, Notre Dame, IN, 2012.
11. Oscar Wilde summarized Lucifer's fall from favour so appropriately. "When that high spirit, that morning-star of evil, fell from heaven, it was as a rebel that he fell." (146) Though initially the first among the angels, Lucifer, the light bearer, does not wish to serve in a secondary role to Christ and consequently is banished from heaven. He wants to be free at all costs. Paradoxically he becomes subservient nonetheless; in order for him to destroy something, God must first create something for him to destroy. Creating and consequently love are worlds forever closed to the devil. (Peck, *People of the Lie*, pp. 203-204) A second point should be made about the devil's prowess or lack thereof. Given the evil wrought throughout the centuries, the devil tends to create an impression of invincibility and yet ". . . *Satan has no power except in a human body.*" (Peck, p. 206) Scott Peck describes two exorcisms in *Glimpses of the Devil*. Jersey, a twenty-six-year-old mother of two, repeatedly underscores the "weak and pathetic" nature of her demons. (Peck, pp. 20-21,100) Additional readings along these lines might include: Job 1: 12, Job 2: 6, Luke 10: 18, Revelation to John (The Apocalypse) 12: 9, *The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999. In his *The Genesis of Perfection: Adam and Eve in Jewish and Christian Imagination*, Gary A. Anderson devotes the first chapter of his copiously researched and eminently readable treatise to 'The Fall of Satan and the Elevation of Adam,' pp. 21-41. See also: St. Augustine [Aurelius Augustinus], *Concerning The City of God against the Pagans*, Henry Bettenson (trans), Book XI, Penguin, London, 1984, chapters 11-15, pp. 442-447; C. S. Lewis, 'Satan,' *A Preface to Paradise Lost*, Galaxy of Oxford University Press, New York, 1961, 4th rpt., Galaxy, 1965, pp. 94-103; Malachi Martin, 'Human Spirit and Lucifer,' *Hostage to the Devil: The Possession and Exorcism of Five Living Americans*, Harper, New York, 1987, pp. 413-425; John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Alastair Fowler (ed), 2nd edn, Book 5, 1971, Longman, London, New York, 1998, pp. 281-338.
 12. James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Chester G. Anderson (ed), 12th rpt., 1968, Viking, New York, 1975, p. 117. To speak obliquely, rather than directly, belongs unequivocally to the devil's repertoire. Consequently Malachi Martin in the earlier cited,

Hostage to the Devil, identifies the Pretence as one of the most crucial, if not the most crucial, stages of an exorcism. In that phase the demonic hides behind, seems to be identical with, the afflicted individual, does not reveal its name. "Sometimes the exorcist cannot shatter the *Pretense* for days. But until he does, he cannot bring matters to a head. If he fails to shatter it at all, he has lost. Perhaps another exorcist replacing him will succeed. But he himself has been beaten." (18) Peck also insists upon this prerequisite. "For the exorcism to occur, the Pretense must be broken; the demonic must be uncovered and brought into the open." Its name must be known. (Peck, *People of the Lie*, pp. 194-195)

13. Catechism, p. 457.
14. Erich H. Fromm, *Escape from Freedom*, 1941, Henry Holt, New York, 1994, p. 116; see also: —, *The Art of Loving*, Harper, New York, 1956, pp. 60-61.
15. Fromm, *The Heart of Man*, p. 108; Peck, *People of the Lie*, p. 78.
16. Peck, p. 78.
17. Ibid., p. 82.
18. Fromm, *The Heart of Man*, p. 133.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid., p. 134.
21. Ibid., p. 135.
22. Peck, p. 78.
23. Ibid.
24. Fromm, *The Heart of Man*, p. 47.
25. Ibid.
26. Ovid, *The Metamorphoses*, Horace Gregory (trans and ed), Mentor, New York, 1963, p. 98.
27. Ibid., p. 97.
28. Erich Neumann, *Tiefenpsychologie und Neue Ethik*, Rascher, Zürich, 1949, p. 36.
29. Peck, pp. 77, 80; Fromm, *The Heart of Man*, pp. 63-67.
30. Ovid, p. 97.
31. Peck, p. 75.
32. Ibid., p. 176. Even such a tortured soul as Sylvia Plath could enumerate the quotidian concerns of the average as well as the not so average person. In formulating a reply to a *London Magazine* questionnaire, she wrote: "'For me, the real issues of our time are the issues of every time - the hurt and wonder of loving; making in all its forms - children, loaves of bread, paintings, buildings; and the conservation of life of all people in all places. . . .'" Anne

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- Stevenson, *Bitter Fame: A Life of Sylvia Plath*, Houghton, Boston, 1989, p. 228.
33. Harry Stack Sullivan, *Conceptions of Modern Psychiatry: The First William Alanson White Memorial Lectures*, 3rd rpt., 1940, The William Alanson White Psychiatric Foundation, Washington, DC, 1947, p. 20. One of the most apt descriptions of love can also be found in Abraham Maslow's *Motivation and Personality*, pp. 182-183. Morton Kelsey offers yet another in *Reaching: The Journey to Fulfillment*, Harper, San Francisco, CA, 1989, pp. 97-98. More reflections on the nature of love can be found in his chapter 'The Theory of Love' in Erich Fromm's *The Art of Loving*, Harper, New York, 1956, pp. 7-82.
 34. Peck, p. 226.
 35. Ibid., p. 245.
 36. Ibid., p. 124.
 37. Erich Fromm, *Man for Himself*, p. 66.
 38. Fromm, *The Heart of Man*, pp. 67-68.
 39. Peck, *People of the Lie*, p. 130.
 40. Ibid., p. 137.
 41. M[organ] Scott Peck, *The Road Less Traveled: A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1978, p. 81.
 42. John Powell, *Unconditional Love: Love without Limits*, Thomas More, Allen, TX, 1999, p. 68.
 43. Rollo May, *The Cry for Myth*, pp. 113-114. Though Dr. Peck does not consider himself an expert in the field of exorcisms, nevertheless he contends that in the cases familiar to him, the individuals agree to ally themselves with the demonic due to their loneliness. They "were accustomed to being lonely" and qualify as loners at the outset of their respective exorcisms. Neither can be considered a trusting individual. Is it surprising that they prove lonely? Trust would seem to constitute the foundation of any relationship, let alone a love relationship of even the most fundamental sort. By its very nature, trust may depend more on intuition than reason. Could they not trust themselves, affirm themselves? Trusting another begins with trusting oneself after all. (Peck, *People of the Lie*, pp. 190, 195, 199.) For a practical guide to the uses of intuition, see Gavin de Becker, *The Gift of Fear: Survival Signals that protect us from Violence*, Little, Brown, Boston, 1997, p. 70 and chapter 2 'The Technology of Intuition,' pp. 25-41. For more about exorcisms, consult: Malachi Martin, *Hostage to the Devil: The Possession and Exorcism of Five Living*

Americans, Harper, New York, 1987; M[organ], Scott Peck, *Glimpses of the Devil: A Psychiatrist's Personal Accounts of Possession, Exorcism, and Redemption*, Free, New York, 2005.

44. May, p. 136.

45. Peck, p. 167.

46. Ibid., p. 168.

Chapter Five: Abuse of Power

He knew that what he was going to do was dreadful.

That danger can become fatal, since the power evil persons wield is so far-reaching, so absolute, so boundless. It is their *fifth* characteristic: the illegitimate use of power, to which we will now turn our focus.

Any number of examples, e.g., his callous treatment of Sybil Vane or the murder of Basil Hallward, could be cited to illustrate Dorian Gray's inappropriate use of power, but the examination of another episode will suffice to underscore the point. In its simplicity, its clarity, its inexorable progression to a dismal end, the nobleman's confrontation with Alan Campbell subsequent to Basil's murder serves to demonstrate salient elements of power gone awry.

It goes without saying that had Dorian not murdered Basil, he would not have needed Alan's services. To kill someone represents the ultimate exercise of power for in its scope - it demands everything of the other, leaving nothing - and in its finality, it qualifies as an act that can never be rectified.

Power always presumes a measure of control or the ability to affect change, to actualize one's wishes, "to *do* something."¹ One needs power "to improve society, to care for a family . . . or in any way accomplish anything creative."² At times one may overstep one's boundaries and exercise an overabundance of power, but that risk the goal-oriented individual must accept, if not outright welcome. To abdicate all manifestations of power is to render oneself ineffectual and possibly to serve as a pawn in the designs of others. In the final analysis, while remaining mindful of the legitimate needs of others, power speaks to "self-assertion, a capacity to stand on one's own feet, an affirmation of one's self."³ Of a singularly malevolent persuasion, Dorian does not favour this benign manifestation of power.

After a prolonged association, though the reason for the rupture is never revealed, Dorian and Alan become estranged. As a consequence of that close relationship, Dorian knows only too well that Alan does not intend to resume contact; he is also aware of his former friend's motivations, his likes and dislikes, his strengths and weaknesses. To appropriate the terminology of Marguerite Shuster, these insights - the evil generally do not lack intelligence - constitute a portion of the structure or mechanism whereby Dorian will exercise power over Alan.⁴ Alan intends never to frequent Dorian's residence again. To circumvent this initial obstacle, Dorian frames his request in terms - "a matter of life and death" - to which Alan will most likely respond. He does so and consequently crosses Dorian's threshold or more accurately enters his lair. (130) Dorian achieves his desire for two reasons: he recognizes Alan's empathetic nature and does not hesitate to take advantage

of it. According to Rollo May's definition of the term in his *Power and Innocence*, Dorian manipulates him.⁵ He uses one of Alan's positive traits to achieve a negative result. To use others, ultimately, to abuse them exemplifies the illegitimate use of power.

Dorian continues to exploit him, until every one of Dorian's unethical as well as illegal goals is realized, until Alan is crushed. Dorian's lust for power knows no limits.

Scott Peck describes a vexing, former patient in the same vein. "Charlene's desire to make a conquest of me, to toy with me, to utterly control our relationship, knew no limits. . . . Her thirst for power was unsubordinated to anything higher than itself."⁶ Extreme wilfulness characterizes the evil, these seekers of absolute power. In describing the case of Roger, another former patient, Scott Peck repeatedly underscores the extreme wilfulness of his parents, the mechanism underlying their damaging effects.

First there is the matter of the degree to which they were willing to sacrifice Roger for the preservation of their narcissistic self-image. There seemed to be no lengths to which they would not go. It bothered them not at all to think of him as a "genetic criminal" - to blandly offer him up to the designation of hopeless, incurable, and malformed as a defense against my suggestion that they themselves needed therapy. I sensed no limit to their willingness to use him as a scapegoat if necessary.⁷

To recall Dr. Peck's assessment of Roger's parents, they like Dorian cross the line.⁸ Committing a capital sin is predicated not only on a sufficiently grave matter, but also on wholehearted consent.⁹ Dorian obliges in both regards. "He knew that what he was going to do was dreadful." (130) Those words, that intent, that recognition alone place Dorian within the category of those epitomizing the second phase of Martin Buber's designation of evil persons.

In the first stage man does not choose, he merely acts; in the second he chooses himself, in the sense of his being-constituted-thus or having-become-thus. The first stage does not yet contain a "radical evil"; whatever misdeeds are committed, their commission is not a doing of the deed but a sliding into it. In the second stage evil grows radical, because what man finds in himself is willed. . . . If we may compare the occurrence of the first stage to an eccentric

whirling movement, the process of the freezing of flowing water may serve as a simile to illustrate the second.¹⁰

Alan has just sat down. During this encounter's initial moments, Dorian's unequivocal consent to the evil he is about to commit fills his mind. Alan's innate sensitivity brings him to Dorian's home. His scientific expertise makes him of intense interest to Dorian in his current predicament. "'You know about chemistry, and things of that kind. You have made experiments.'" (130) The nobleman's knowledge, concerning his former companion's strengths, extends not to one or the other required attributes, but to both. And he exploits both. The psychological and the physical power structure necessary to carry out his nefarious scheme is well conceived, well buttressed.

Regardless of the manner or the number of Dorian's appeals to do so, Alan refuses to obliterate Basil's remains. Over a half dozen times with a seemingly endless profusion of arguments, the chemist resists acceding to Dorian's request. (130-132) But Dorian must have his way. Particularly in the face of such vehement reluctance, concerted power must be marshalled. And Dorian marshals it. In his eyes, no other option exists, for murderers are hanged in Victorian England. (132) Either Dorian faces ruin or Alan does. In view of the precariousness of his situation and its concomitant anxiety, how can Dorian possibly choose on behalf of someone other than himself?

Again he capitalizes on information he could only have gleaned from his prolonged association with Alan. In order to bend him to his will, Dorian capitalized earlier on one of Alan's noble character traits; now he resorts to reminding his former friend of an ignominious episode from his past. Though the precise nature of his transgression is never disclosed, that does not matter. Upon reading Dorian's indictment, Alan's instantaneous response betrays its seriousness. "As he read it, his face became ghastly pale, and he fell back in his chair. A horrible sense of sickness came over him. He felt as if his heart was beating itself to death in some empty hollow." (132) With that annihilating gesture, Dorian's power over Alan Campbell becomes excessive, evolves into coercion, into unmitigated force. It qualifies as an illegitimate use of power for its application does not enhance, but rather vilifies, eviscerates. "A groan broke from Campbell's lips, and he shivered all over." (132) Power, in and of itself, "is neither good nor evil, ethically speaking; it only *is*."¹¹ Its positive or negative designation depends entirely upon its intended use. Alan's case does not leave room for speculation. To spare himself, and quite possibly someone else, public disgrace, he executes Dorian's wish and removes virtually all traces of the artist's corpse from the residence. (135) Dorian himself consigns Basil's grey ulster as well as his Gladstone bag to the flames in the library's fireplace later that same evening.

(141) Not long after, rumours of Alan's suicide arouse speculation in London society. (161) He shoots himself in his laboratory. (168) That act alone bears testimony to the irrefutable fact that Dorian had not stopped at manipulating Alan, but had rather exploited him. Or as Rollo May frames his conclusion: "Exploitative power always presupposes violence or the threat of violence."¹² "This is the simplest and, humanely speaking, most destructive kind of power. It is subjecting persons to whatever use they may have to the one who holds the power."¹³ Had Dorian's moral descent not begun in much the same way? Did his verbally violent dressing down of Sybil Vane not lead directly to her suicide and was this calamitous and irreversible situation not effected even more quickly than Alan's?

Other parallels between the two cases can be easily drawn as well. Both Sybil and Alan enter their respective situations as weakened individuals. She assumes a psychologically vulnerable posture vis-à-vis her fiancé due to her inexperience as well as her infatuation with him; naturally she wishes to please him, and consequently she becomes emotionally dependent upon Dorian and he exploits not only her youth, but also her good will. As indicated before, Alan's compassion, his expertise as well as his grave misstep cater to Dorian's manipulative designs. It should also not go unnoticed that he chooses to encounter both individuals when they are by themselves. Basil and Harry are summarily dismissed after the debacle of Sybil's performance. "'Go away, Harry,' cried the lad. 'I want to be alone. Basil, you must go.'" (68-69) They do as told. Dorian confronts Sybil alone in the greenroom. (69) No one can intervene on her behalf. No one can ask him to cease his prolonged verbal humiliation. Dorian's valet, Francis, announces Alan Campbell's arrival and then, as expected, takes his leave. (130) The two men are alone. Once the deal is brokered, Alan asks to fetch some equipment from his laboratory. In order to continue his deliberate sequestration, naturally his request has to be refused. (133) Once Dorian has vetted the note the chemist sends to his laboratory assistant, only then does the valet receive permission to reappear and take the message from Dorian's hands. "As the hall door shut, Campbell started nervously, and, having got up from the chair, went over to the chimney-piece. He was shivering with a kind of ague." (133)

Vulnerability and enforced isolation characterize the life of a child. How can a child know what transpires in another family? Given their limited perspective (through no fault of theirs), children do not have a basis for comparison. We automatically assume all families resemble ours. That reality speaks to the issue of isolation. Dorian infantilizes both Sybil and Alan. No doubt, they both contribute to that emasculation, as it were; nevertheless, the primary failure belongs to him for he manipulates, he exploits, he isolates. In doing so, he ruins them both.

The most typical victim of evil is a child. This is to be expected, because children are not only the weakest and most vulnerable members of our society but also because parents wield a power over the lives of their children that is essentially absolute. . . . The child's immaturity and resulting dependency mandate its parents' possession of great power but do not negate the fact that this power, like all power, is subject to abuse of various degrees of malignancy. Moreover, the relationship between parent and child is one of enforced intimacy.¹⁴

While perusing the insight just quoted, it is perhaps astonishing to note how many times essential concepts characterizing Dorian's confrontation with both Sybil and Alan reappear throughout: victim, weak, vulnerable, immature, dependent, power, intimacy. In view of the grisly outcomes, Dorian's power reaches not only malignant, but also fatal proportions.

In one aspect, however, the cases of Sybil and Alan do not resemble each other. In the bluntest of terms, Dorian breaks his connection with Sybil, while they are alone. Yet while alone with Alan, he insists on forging a connection between the chemist and himself, a connection Alan resists at every turn, until he can resist no longer. In *The Gift of Fear*, Gavin de Becker entitles this manipulative manoeuvre: "forced teaming." Though seemingly benign and coincidental, it is "intentional and directed, and it is one of the most sophisticated manipulations. The detectable signal of forced teaming is the projection of a shared purpose or experience where none exists. . . ."¹⁵ Dorian wins his arguments with such appeals as: "'But I can't help myself. You are the one man who is able to save me. I am forced to bring you into the matter. I have no option. . . .'" (130) His entreaties reach a crescendo: "'You must have something to do with it. Wait, wait a moment; listen to me. Only listen, Alan.'" (131) As happens so frequently, violence follows: Basil's body is desecrated and Alan commits suicide.

Notes

1. Marguerite Shuster, *Power, Pathology, Paradox: The Dynamics of Evil and Good*, Academie Books, Grand Rapids, MI, 1987, p. 95.
2. M[organ] Scott Peck, *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1983, p. 176.
3. Rollo May, *Love and Will*, Delta, New York, 1989, p. 146.
4. Shuster, p. 95.

5. Rollo May, *Power and Innocence: A Search for the Sources of Violence*, Norton, New York, 1972, p. 106.
6. Peck, p. 176.
7. Ibid., p. 106.
8. Ibid.
9. Catholic Church, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1994, p. 455.
10. Martin Buber, *Good and Evil: Two Interpretations*, Ronald Gregor Smith (trans), Scribner's, New York, 1953, p. 140.
11. Rollo May, *Power and Innocence*, p. 122.
12. Ibid., pp. 105-106.
13. Ibid., p. 105.
14. Peck, p. 107.
15. Gavin de Becker, *The Gift of Fear: Survival Signals that protect us from Violence*, Little, Brown, Boston, 1997, p. 55.

Chapter Six: Scapegoating

I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?

This essay will focus exclusively on the *sixth* of the eight characteristics: scapegoating. Theories abound as to the exact nature of scapegoating. René Girard, Tom Douglas, John Dyckman and Joseph Cutler, Charlie Campbell and Arnold Angenendt, among others, made significant contributions in this area. Their research focuses on the term's multi-faceted definition,¹ the theological as well as secular contexts,² its possible motivations,³ the stages inherent in the process,⁴ its ramifications.⁵ Some scholars consider scapegoating a variant of projection and consequently a defence mechanism⁶ (these vary from pathological to absolutely essential,⁷ but all researchers more or less agree on two related issues. 1. Scapegoating consists in blaming someone or something else for the perpetrator's transgression. The ill-advised act or one so perceived engenders guilt and/or shame. These emotional responses result in discomfort,⁸ threaten to destroy psychic equilibrium,⁹ are deemed undesirable and therefore the transgressor makes every effort to transfer them from him- or herself to someone or something else. 2. Scapegoating can also be understood as an act of expiation for sin. In this instance, the faultless victim assumes the sins of others and is ultimately sacrificed to restore the community to its former integrity.¹⁰ In his classic, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, C.S. Lewis's Aslan summarizes that salvific premise in these words: "... when a willing victim who had committed no treachery was killed in a traitor's stead, the Table would crack and Death itself would start working backward."¹¹

As Dorian epitomizes the diametric opposite of the acquiescent and innocent victim, his choices place him exclusively into the first category: malevolent scapegoating.

Evil persons are masters of such scapegoating. They cannot abide the feeling of falling short; they must at all costs - and they are high indeed - project a positive self-image in their own eyes and those of others. They must appear perfect. In fact they are driven to do so.¹² Even if the evidence to the contrary repeatedly challenges their erroneous assumptions or their desired self-image, they will displace that temporary notion of inadequacy and the ensuing negative emotional response from themselves onto someone or something else. How can they possibly bear any blame! Surely they were not, even partially, responsible! Whatever the problem might be, actual or imagined, the fault always lies with someone else. In their own minds they never contribute to the debacle. Oscar Wilde's Dorian Gray excels at malevolent scapegoating.

As this manner of scapegoating negatively affects others and burdens them through no fault of their own, it invariably constitutes an

element of victimization. Consequently Dorian Gray's major victims should be enumerated. In chronological order, they are: Sibyl Vane, Basil Hallward, Alan Campbell, James Vane and Dorian himself. As reneging on his responsibility for his missteps characterizes Dorian's behaviour, he will logically be eliminated from this final tally.

But even before delineating the scenes depicting Dorian's scapegoating behaviour in regard to the four victims just mentioned, an even earlier scene in which he initially exhibits his predilection for evasive manoeuvres requires explanation. The nature of Dorian's wish does not in and of itself qualify as an example of scapegoating; nevertheless it does foreshadow his multiple acts of scapegoating.¹³ He doesn't in effect blame someone or something else for what he considers his misfortune and yet he does not accept as his what justifiably accrues to him. Allow me to explain.

The young nobleman descends from the platform on which he has been posing and asks if the portrait has reached completion. Though Basil and Lord Henry address several questions directly to him in the course of their rather brief conversation, hours seem to elapse before Dorian speaks again. Slowly, deliberately, "as if awakened from some dream" (25) he reaches an undeniable conclusion. The absolute perfection of the portrait will never change; his stellar looks will doubtlessly fade with the passing of the years. Or as he silently summarizes this thought process: "The life that was to make his soul would mar his body." (25) Rather than extolling the painter's skill or assuring him of his gratitude, as might be in order, Dorian's first words after his rather protracted silence express nothing but dismay.

"How sad it is!" murmured Dorian Gray, with his eyes still fixed upon the portrait. "How sad it is! I shall grow old, and horrible, and dreadful. But this picture will remain always young. It will never be older than this particular day of June...." (25, 26)

In absolute rejection of reality, in this total refusal to accept what he considers undesirable and with all the vehemence of youth and its wilfulness - seven of the nine sentences postulating his desire culminate in exclamation points - Dorian proclaims his wish: "'If it were only the other way! If it were I who was to be always young, and the picture that was to grow old! For that - for that - I would give everything!'" (26) And if that statement weren't clear enough, he reemphasizes the depth of his desire: "'Yes, there is nothing in the whole world I would not give! I would give my soul for that!'" (26)

At first glance, Dorian doesn't scapegoat in its accepted definition. He doesn't foist his rightful responsibility for a supposed misstep onto someone or something else; he doesn't after all blame the picture for the

aging process, but he does lay the groundwork for doing so. He attempts to transfer what he cannot tolerate inside himself to the external world, to the portrait; that intent does qualify in its broadest sense as projection, a psychological manoeuvre, which frequently precedes scapegoating. His wish epitomizes an utter repudiation of the negative, as he perceives it. He will not incorporate it into his life, even if he must pay with his soul. Even if he should make others suffer. For his sins.

And he does make them suffer. As Scott Peck reminds us: The evil “themselves may not suffer, but those around them do. They cause suffering.”¹⁴

As noted elsewhere, Sibyl Vane heads the list of Dorian’s victims. In his dismissal of her, after her disastrous stage performance, his lengthy as well as merciless barrage contains several examples of scapegoating. Though Sibyl repeatedly attempts to explain to her fiancé why her performance lacked the customary polish, why she deliberately altered her stage presence, he responds in placing all the blame on her for his devastation and, in his eyes, inescapable and justifiable disavowal. “‘You have killed my love,’ he bluntly asserts.” (70) Should she misunderstand his rejection, he repeats the identical sentiment: “‘Yes,’ he cried, ‘you have killed my love.’” And even before she begins her apology and begs him for forgiveness, his scapegoating continues: “‘You have thrown it all away. You are shallow and stupid.’” (70) “‘You have spoiled the romance of my life. How little you can know of love, if you say it mars your art!’” (70) During their tortuous exchange, she - not once but several times - affirms her love for him. It is not she, but Dorian, who decides to terminate the love relationship. It is he who has “‘thrown it all away.’” And it is only he, who lacks depth as well as wisdom. In a classic demonstration of scapegoating, Dorian makes Sibyl solely responsible for the dissolution of their relationship.

The damage done, he returns home to find that, pursuant to his wish, the portrait, rather than he, has indeed altered. Basil Hallward’s so perfectly rendered image of the comely lad had evolved into “the visible emblem of his conscience.” (74) But how can he accept responsibility for his cruelty vis-à-vis his former fiancée? How can he admit that he, not she, precipitated the rupture of their liaison? How can he face and incorporate into his psyche the undeniable fact that the picture did not lie? No matter how intensely he wishes it were otherwise, the evidence remains obvious. “The quivering, ardent sunlight showed him the lines of cruelty round the mouth as clearly as if he had been looking into a mirror after he had done some dreadful thing.” (72-73) But he does not do dreadful things. At the cost of denying reality, Dorian must preserve belief in his perfection. “Since the evil, deep down, feel themselves to be faultless, it is inevitable that when they are in conflict with the world they will invariably perceive the conflict as the world’s fault.”¹⁵

Dorian must shift the blame to someone else. After some agonizing moments, much pacing to and fro, and an occasional self-directed question, he states unequivocally: "It was the girl's fault, not his." (73) He reinforces his delusion: ". . . she had disappointed him. She had been shallow and unworthy." (73)

Assailed by guilt and a host of vivid, if unpleasant, memories of his last encounter with Sibyl, Dorian continues to find reasons for his aberrant behaviour anywhere but at its rightful source. Certainly the responsibility for his self-acknowledged callousness cannot be assigned to him? Perhaps God is to blame? "Why had he been made like that? Why had such a soul been given to him?" (73) He doesn't even stop short of transferring the blame onto an inanimate object, the portrait itself: "It had taught him to love his own beauty. Would it teach him to loathe his own soul?" (73) This may be the first instance that Dorian blames Basil's picture; the record will show, that it will evolve as one of his most frequent evasive strategies.

After a prolonged period of rest (he sleeps past noon), Dorian continues to obsess about the alteration of the portrait. Confused, somewhat remorseful and intending to marry Sibyl after all, he pens a detailed letter asking for her forgiveness. "He covered page after page with wild words of sorrow, and wilder words of pain." (76) The passion of his words would seem to reflect efforts at self-recrimination and to confirm the assumption of some responsibility at last; nonetheless, they fall short. "When we blame ourselves we feel that no one else has a right to blame us. It is the confession, not the priest, that gives us absolution. When Dorian had finished the letter, he felt that he had been forgiven." (76-77)

Moments thereafter, Lord Henry apprises the nobleman of his fiancée's suicide; only too quickly does Dorian realize that he cannot undo the errors of the previous evening. He must defend himself, and if that means Sibyl must be maligned, must assume the role of scapegoat once more, so be it. With the twisted logic of the consummate narcissist and as if the inconsolable girl should have asked his or, for that matter, anyone's permission to do so, he proclaims: "She had no right to kill herself. It was selfish of her." (79) To justify his actions even further, to exonerate himself of any shred of responsibility in Sibyl's death, he states: "It is not my fault that this terrible tragedy has prevented my doing what was right." (79) Sibyl's suicide blatantly calls Dorian's actions into question. From the grave she accuses him of wrongdoing. That indelible reminder of his fallibility, he could not or would not tolerate. In response he scapegoats. Or as Scott Peck phrases it: "A predominant characteristic . . . of the behavior of those I call evil is scapegoating. Because in their hearts they consider themselves above reproach, they must lash out at anyone who does reproach them. They sacrifice others to preserve their self-image of perfection."¹⁶

Before analysing additional examples of Dorian's scapegoating, a crucial distinction requires attention. Many believe that evil people qualify as evil because their conscience fails to function properly. They simply cannot distinguish right from wrong and should therefore not be judged as harshly as those who do. Their attempts at scapegoating belie that fact. They wouldn't be so eager to place the blame on someone or something else, if they didn't blame themselves, if they didn't sense that they had done something wrong. Therein lies another of evil's paradoxes. On the one hand, as stated earlier, evil individuals consider themselves perfect; on the other, they recognize their shortcomings only too clearly and consequently expend untold energy to displace that realization. Or as Dr. Peck would say:

The essential component of evil is not the absence of a sense of sin or imperfection but the unwillingness to tolerate that sense. At one and the same time, the evil are aware of their evil and desperately trying to avoid that awareness.¹⁷

On more than one occasion, the then practicing psychiatrist maintains that evil persons will not only disavow their failures, but will do so in simultaneously projecting those same failures onto someone or something else. They harm others, while attempting to save themselves.

Strangely enough, evil people are often destructive because they are attempting to destroy evil. The problem is that they misplace the locus of the evil. Instead of destroying others they should be destroying the sickness within themselves. As life often threatens their self-image of perfection, they are often busily engaged in hating and destroying that life - usually in the name of righteousness. The fault, however, may not be so much that they hate life as that they do *not* hate the sinful part of themselves.¹⁸

Hating the sinful parts of themselves strikes these people as far too dangerous an enterprise. They consider such self-recrimination tantamount to suicide.¹⁹ How could they survive such scrutiny? Consequently they reach for "an extreme form of self-protectiveness which invariably sacrificed others rather than themselves."²⁰ The scapegoats continue to multiply. Sibyl Vane may be the first of Dorian's victims in his concerted efforts to hide from himself, but how can she be the last?

Having learned of Sibyl's death in a local newspaper - he expected Dorian to notify him - Basil Hallward visits his friend the day after her suicide. Intending to commiserate with him, Basil finds Dorian seemingly

untouched by the previous day's tragedy. As he cannot fathom such callousness, the artist not only verbalizes his outrage at Dorian's behaviour, but also assails him with a spate of justifiable questions, e.g., "You went to the Opera while Sibyl Vane was lying dead in some sordid lodging? You can talk to me of other women being charming, and of Patti singing divinely, before the girl you loved has even the quiet of the grave to sleep in?" (85) Or Basil states in disbelief: "You talk as if you had no heart, no pity in you." (85) How can a chronic scapegoater like Dorian tolerate such an assault? A convenient target for his displeasure must and will be found. Just as he had done after initially seeing his full-length portrait, Dorian remains silent. Regaining his composure, he attacks Basil: "You only taught me to be vain." (85) He blames Basil and his undeniable artistic skill for feeding his overweening self-absorption.

The eminent art historian, Roy Strong, concludes that individuals and consequently portraits have fascinated the British since time immemorial. With the exception of the US and Australia, only the United Kingdom houses a National Portrait Gallery, "a great parade of faces across the centuries staring down at us."²¹ Strong underscores the point; throughout most of British history painting could be understood as synonymous with portraiture. "The earliest pictures to enter any great house were those of the monarch and the owner's family and friends, growing and extending through time so that they flooded up along staircases and corridors into bedrooms. . . . The impulse is as strong today as the ubiquitous family snapshot album. . . ." ²² In other words, having his portrait painted should not have struck Dorian as something out of the ordinary for him or anyone of his class; it need not have fuelled his burgeoning narcissism and initiated his fall from grace. As a decent and mature individual,²³ Basil looks to himself for the cause of Dorian's noticeable change of heart and assumes some of the responsibility for his friend's inappropriate and immature response (85); nevertheless, the decision to worship himself comes strictly from within Dorian. Though the trajectory of Dorian's decisions to evolve into a thoroughly self-centred individual is documented at length elsewhere, a single observation should confirm that Dorian bears the blame for his ever more rampant egotism. Just before murdering him, Dorian allows Basil to see the now disfigured portrait, he meticulously crafted almost two decades earlier.

He held the light up again to the canvas, and examined it. The surface seemed to be quite undisturbed, and as he had left it. It was from within, apparently, that the foulness and horror had come. Through some strange quickening of inner life the leprosy of sin were slowly eating the thing away. (122)

Not surprisingly, the moments before and after Dorian fatally stabs Basil offer various examples of scapegoating. The almost thirty-eight-year-old nobleman accosts his well-meaning friend with the almost identical words, he formulated just after Sibyl Vane's suicide: "... when I was a boy . . . you met me, flattered me, and taught me to be vain of my good looks." (121) However, he does not only scapegoat the artist, but also his work and claims that the portrait destroyed him (122); he cannot admit that he is destroying himself. Even after Basil's death, Dorian maintains this fallacy and speaks of "the fatal portrait to which all his misery had been due." (124) He will adhere to this falsehood until the moment that he stabs himself. (167)

While recalling the names and circumstances of so many of his victims, e.g., Basil Hallward, Alan Campbell and James Vane, Dorian clings to his imbedded belief as he scapegoats the portrait and its creator yet again: "Basil had painted the portrait that marred his life. He could not forgive him that. It was the portrait that had done everything." (168) While formulating ways to escape the then customary punishment for homicide, Dorian continues to disavow his murderous impulse, continues to scapegoat. Something had been in the air; the planets had perhaps been misaligned. (124)

But why question the forces of nature, if victims for one's scapegoating tendencies can be found so much closer? Years earlier, Dorian located his victims among his family members. To insure that they cannot contest his accusations, and consequently serve as a most suitable defence mechanism, he enumerates only deceased relatives.

Was it young Herbert's life that he sometimes led? Had some strange poisonous germ crept from body to body till it reached his own? Was it some dim sense of that ruined grace that had made him so suddenly, and almost without cause, give utterance, in Basil's studio, to the mad prayer that had so changed his life? (111)

Perhaps he had inherited the temperament of Lady Elizabeth Devereux or the sensual proclivities of Lord Beckenham? (112) But why look only to his ancestors, why focus on such a finite number to locate the motivations for his choices? The "strange terrible figures that had passed across the stage of the world" modelled for him the attractions of sin and the lure of evil. (113) Therefore, they are to blame for all that has gone and continues to go wrong in his life.

When Dorian forces the third of his major victims, Alan Campbell, to assist him in avoiding capital punishment, his scapegoating tendencies only seem to intensify. To justify Basil's murder in Alan's eyes, he blames

Basil for his current dilemma: “‘I killed him. You don’t know what he made me suffer. Whatever my life is, he had more to do with the making or the marring of it than poor Harry has had. He may not have intended it, the result was the same.’” (131) The chemist refuses Dorian’s escalating entreaties and the now desperate nobleman applies pressure to Alan’s jugular through the familiar tool of scapegoating. He threatens him with blackmail: “‘. . . you leave me no alternative.’” (132) To state the obvious: if Dorian had not murdered Basil, he would not have needed to elicit Alan’s help in divesting himself of any suspicion for Basil’s disappearance. Dorian would not have required an alternative.

Just before Alan Campbell commences the grisly work of disposing of Hallward’s body, Dorian glances at the portrait. Alan can be coerced into obliterating the artist’s remains, but in its hideousness the painting still serves as an omnipresent, if silent reminder of Dorian’s latest and irreversible transgression. As he had done after hearing of Sibyl’s suicide, he blames the portrait for his criminal act and pronounces the canvas “fatal.” (134)

Once more Dorian blames the portrait for his sin. Near the outset of this essay, it was stated that when the twenty-year-old makes his wish, he does not make the portrait an object of his scapegoating in the strict definition of that term. He doesn’t blame the portrait for any failure. He merely desires that Basil’s handiwork bear the signs of aging, while he does not. As Dorian has now maligned the portrait at least half a dozen times that initial interpretation requires revision. Dorian has indeed repeatedly shifted responsibility for his wrongdoing onto the portrait; that fact alone constitutes scapegoating. He also fully acknowledges the realization. The picture has evolved into “a visible symbol of the degradation of sin. Here was an ever-present sign of the ruin men brought upon their souls.” (76) In other words, a monstrous act of scapegoating underlies the entire novel structure.

Sibyl’s brother, James Vane, garners the fourth place among Dorian’s major victims. Dorian doesn’t directly point his finger at him, but Lord Henry does so in his stead. Nevertheless the fault still rests with Dorian. After concerted efforts fuelled by revenge, James Vane learns of Dorian’s identity and his whereabouts and pursues him onto his country estate. During a morning shooting-party, one of Dorian’s guests, while aiming for a hare, unintentionally kills James. (154-155) If Dorian hadn’t contributed to his sister’s suicide so many years ago, James would not have wished to avenge her untimely death. James would not have had any reason to seek out her former suitor and consequently would not have found himself on the grounds of Selby Royal. Though Dorian feels the proverbial noose tightening around his neck, Lord Henry exonerates him completely: “‘My dear fellow, it can’t be helped. It was the man’s fault.’” (155) James sought revenge;

consequently, he is partially to blame for his misfortune. However, the preponderance of the fault remains Dorian's.

Though Adrian Singleton does not belong on a roster of his major victims, the young man's sordid fate and Dorian's reaction to it offers such a telling example of Gray's consistent scapegoating, that it cannot be ignored. Dorian chances upon the eviscerated Adrian in an opium den. He appears much like the clinically depressed fifteen-year-old brought to Dr. Peck for counselling: ". . . it was as if he were already dead - dull-eyed, listless, apathetic to the point of lifelessness, beyond terror."²⁴ That impression lingers in Dorian's mind and he does harbour some misgivings. "His meeting with Adrian Singleton had strangely moved him, and he wondered if the ruin of that young life was really to be laid at his door, as Basil had said to him with such infamy of insult." (146) But after a few reflective moments, in a highly ironical assertion considering Dorian's own end, he exonerates himself from all responsibility for Adrian. "Yet, after all, what did it matter to him? One's days were too brief to take the burden of another's errors on one's shoulders." (146) His reverie culminates with an insight whose wisdom he has yet to understand fully. "Each man lived his own life, and paid his own price for living it. The only pity was one had to pay so often for a single fault. One had to pay over and over again, indeed. In her dealings with man Destiny never closed her accounts." (146)

Before concluding these arguments, one of Scott Peck's caveats bears repeating: a single moral lapse or even several grave ones do not an evil person make.²⁵ If neither the number nor nature of their misdeeds defines the evil, how might we recognize them? "While usually subtle, their destructiveness is remarkably consistent. This is because those who have 'crossed over the line' are characterized by their *absolute* refusal to tolerate the sense of their own sinfulness."²⁶ Dorian's destructiveness, his scapegoating assumes a variety of forms. In his own voice or someone else's, he blames God, the laws of the cosmos, his ancestors, historical figures of long ago, and his immediate circle of associates; they do not qualify as his friends, for the way Dorian treats them is not how friends treat each other. He also blames the portrait. Over and over again. He consistently fails to blame himself. The relentlessness of his scapegoating testifies to the fact that he could or would not face his own sinfulness. Therefore, he could or would not embark on the next logical step (to the sane mind) and alter his ways. The stronger the pressure to do so, the more compelling the evidence of his failures becomes, the more vehement his denials. We cannot change if we fail to acknowledge that we should;²⁷ we cannot change if we repeatedly turn the power to do so over to someone or something else. Therein lies the paradoxical nature of scapegoating. In the final analysis, it weakens us, and we wanted to appear strong.

A last thought: it doesn't require a Biblical scholar to recognize that the title of these reflections on the nature of Dorian Gray's relentless forays into the world of scapegoating is taken from the plight of Cain and Abel. Upon murdering his brother, the Lord confronts Cain and asks about Abel's whereabouts. Cain pleads ignorance and consequently attempts to disavow responsibility for his evil act.²⁸ How many times did Dorian do the same in blaming someone or something else for his transgressions? Though admittedly ancient, Cain and Abel's situation does not constitute the first instance of reneging responsibility for sin. In even earlier verses of Genesis, God reprimands Adam and Eve for disobeying his command and eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Their responses to his multiple questions elicit the first documented case of scapegoating: "The man said, 'The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.' Then the Lord God said to the woman, 'What is this that you have done?' The woman said, 'The serpent tricked me, and I ate.'"²⁹ In denying their complicity and in shifting the blame, Adam and Eve obviously intend to avoid the consequences of their actions. They respond quickly, so quickly that their answers appear virtually innate. Mentioned before, perhaps the desire to blame others, so we are not found wanting, is part and parcel of the survival instinct? A child when accused of a misdeed will instantly reply: not me. Mature individuals, when similarly confronted, will first look to themselves for the cause of matters gone awry. They may be few, but they are the strong among us. To them belongs the power to save not only themselves, but also others.

Notes

1. Tom Douglas, *Scapegoats: Transferring Blame*, Routledge, London, New York, 1995, pp. 3-12; John M. Dyckman and Joseph A. Cutler, *Scapegoats at Work: Taking the Bull's Eye Off Your Back*, Praeger, Westport, CT, London, 2003, pp. 9-13; Charlie Campbell, *Scapegoat: A History of Blaming Other People*, Duckworth Overlook, London, New York, 2011, pp. 31-36.
2. Dyckman, pp. 83-97; René Girard, *Le Bouc émissaire*, Bernard Grasset, Paris, 1982, pp. 23-36; Campbell, pp. 63-79.
3. Phebe Cramer, *Protecting the Self: Defense Mechanisms in Action*, Guilford, New York, London, 2006, p. 70.
4. Douglas, pp. 109-134.
5. Dyckman, pp. 83-97.
6. Cramer, pp. 70-92; M[organ] Scott Peck, *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1983, p. 73.

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7. Cramer, p. 10.
 8. Ibid., p. 70; Douglas, p. 113.
 9. Campbell, p. 183.
 10. Arnold Angenendt, *Die Revolution des geistigen Opfers: Blut - Sündenbock - Eucharistie*, Herder, Freiburg, Basel, Wien, 2011, pp. 61-66.
 11. C. S. Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe: A Story for Children*, Collier, New York, 1970, p. 160.
 12. Peck, p. 124.
 13. Cramer, p. 71.
 14. Peck, p. 124.
 15. Ibid., pp. 73-74.
 16. Peck, p. 73.
 17. Ibid., p. 76.
 18. Ibid., pp. 74-75.
 19. Ibid., p. 77.
 20. Ibid., p. 75.
 21. Roy Strong, *The Spirit of Britain: A Narrative History of the Arts*, Hutchinson, London, 1999, p. 682.
 22. Ibid., p. 682. Ironically enough, Victorian portraiture intended to capture "heroic action and perfect physical form" in order to inspire the onlooker to fulfil "his own ethical and corporeal potential." Roy Strong, *Recreating the Past: British History and the Victorian Painter*, Pierpont Morgan Library, Thames and Hudson, 1978, p. 16. See also: James Stourton and Charles Sebag-Montefiore, *The British as Art Collectors: From the Tudors to the Present*, Scala, London, 2012.
 23. Peck., p. 72.
 24. Ibid., p. 52.
 25. Ibid., p. 70.
 26. Ibid., p. 71.
 27. Ibid., p. 74.
 28. *The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition*, Genesis 4: 1-16, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999.
 29. Ibid., Genesis 3: 13-14.

Chapter Seven: Lying

**He himself could not help wondering at the
calm of his demeanour, and for a moment
felt keenly the terrible pleasure of a double life.**

Lying, the *seventh* of the eight characteristics, now invites our mindfulness. Before delving into the inquiry proper, we should note that though the evil individuals encountered in our everyday lives do not necessarily manifest all eight characteristics, all of them lie. There are no exceptions. Dr. Peck chose the title of his treatise well: *People of the Lie*. All of them will attempt to hide their proclivities not only from others, but also and primarily from themselves. Dorian Gray proves a grand master of deception. His lies are so numerous and so diverse that without exaggeration one can speak of an ever so skilfully woven tapestry of lies.

When viewing the nobleman's lies as a continuum, a triple-faceted and striking progression (or more accurately regression) reveals itself. 1. At critical junctures, Dorian Gray makes the decision to continue along this path of deception. He doesn't fall into evil without his cooperation. No one ever does. Over and over again he elects not to mend his ways. 2. As the lies accumulate so does the gravity of their consequences, until these can no longer be reversed. 3. Simultaneously Dorian's mental state deteriorates; he begins with suspicion and progresses to fear and then terror, then madness, until the self splits and even he acknowledges that he leads a double life. Yet he considers himself powerless to reverse or cease his fall from grace. Initially he wishes to exercise absolute control over his own fate, in other words, to be free at all costs. Gradually, inexorably, he becomes driven. The supposed sovereign evolves into the slave. Therein lies one of the paradoxes of evil.

Let me begin with the most obvious type of prevarication. Dorian verbalizes something in order to deceive the listener. After Sybil's suicide, Basil visits Dorian with the intent of sharing in what the artist presumes will be his friend's grief following his fiancée's death. Instead, the young dandy harbours no lasting regrets. But he does notice the change in the canvas and pulls a screen in front of it. When Basil voices his justifiable outrage and stunned disbelief at such an insult to his exceptional artistic skills, Dorian explains his motivation: "The light was too strong on the portrait." (88) Dorian knows unequivocally that the screen's primary function serves to hide the alteration of the picture. Consequently, this facile statement conforms perfectly to Sissela Bok's definition of lying. "When we undertake to deceive others, we communicate messages meant to mislead them, to make them believe what we ourselves do not believe."¹

A short time later, Dorian calls for Mr. Hubbard, a renowned London frame-maker, to move the portrait from the library to Dorian's former play-and subsequent schoolroom at the top of his residence. During this transaction, he lies twice. Hubbard assures the nobleman that he and his assistant will eagerly perform any service requested of them. In response, Dorian inquires in the most polite of tones, if the inordinately heavy object could be carried upstairs without removing its elaborate covering. He justifies his request with what appears a rather reasonable explanation, even if it is a lie: "I don't want it to get scratched going upstairs." (94) The arduous task accomplished at last, Hubbard naturally enough requests to see the picture. Given the efforts he expended, he would seem to have earned a glimpse. Dorian's answer proves as deft as it is misleading: "It would not interest you, Mr. Hubbard." (96) Of course, the subject of the painting would interest the accommodating tradesman; he had just asked to look at it.

Basil plans to leave for Paris on the midnight train and intends to visit with his long-time friend before departing. The two men have known each other for almost two decades; on the morrow Dorian will celebrate his 38th birthday. In early November around eleven at night, London's weather confirms its reputation; damp and cold, thick fog hampers visibility. Nevertheless, Dorian does acknowledge, at least to himself, that he recognizes Basil as the artist leaves the nobleman's home after waiting there for several hours. Hallward also recognizes his friend, turns and follows him. Basil's detailed explanation, concerning his lengthy wait and his immediate travel plans, culminate in a single question: "Didn't you recognize me?" (115) Dorian does not wish to converse with Basil and lies permeate virtually every line of his nuanced reply. "In this fog, my dear Basil? Why, I can't even recognize Grosvenor Square. I believe my house is somewhere about here, but I don't feel at all certain about it. I am sorry you are going away, as I have not seen you for ages." (115)

With the exception of the final clause, all of Dorian's statements qualify as lies. Basil takes his friend's assurances literally, however, and asks for a brief word. As Dorian does not have the slightest inclination to speak to Basil, he says just the opposite of what he means and, in addition, feigns concern for the artist's situation: "I shall be charmed. But won't you miss your train?" (115)

During their rather one-sided discourse, amidst all the queries as well as the accusations Basil levels against Dorian, yet another type of lie comes to the fore. Basil wonders whether the rumours could possibly be true that his friend has been seen "slinking in disguise into the foulest dens in London." (118) The verbal lie gains dimension, as it were, and graduates into a situational one. Disguising himself constitutes the first time he reaches for the situational lie. It will only prove the first of many.

Later that same evening, Dorian murders Basil. In the midst of devising a strategy to dispose of Basil's remains and thereby create the illusion that the painter is still alive (161), Dorian fosters yet a second duplicitous situation. Both are meant to serve as an alibi for murder. Only too aware of the legal consequences of his act, he understandably fears for his life. "Every year - every month, almost - men were strangled in England for what he had done." (124) Dressed for the inclement weather, he exits his residence after midnight and promptly summons his valet to the door with the pretext that he neglected to take his key the previous evening. He initiates the exchange with the valet in once again pretending to commiserate: "I am sorry to have had to wake you up, Francis," he said stepping in; "but I had forgotten my latch-key." (125) Should the authorities ever be motivated to ask - Dorian notices the policeman patrolling the neighbourhood - he asks his drowsy servant to verify the hour, when he allegedly returns home. He layers lie upon lie; he also queries Francis, if there had been any visitors in the course of the evening. Then he expresses his dismay that he did not have the opportunity to visit with Basil. As a final insult to his valet's acquiescent nature, Dorian asks if Basil perhaps left a message. Francis dutifully replies: "No, sir, except that he would write to you from Paris, if he did not find you in the club." (125) No doubt, those words do constitute Basil's promise. All else qualifies as lies. Dorian continues weaving his tapestry of deceit ever so skilfully and includes the devoted Francis in his schemes. The incisive words of P.D. James ring true and as a master of detective fiction, she ought to know: ". . . murder is a contaminating crime which changes all those who come into touch with it. . . ."²

But even these elaborate measures would not seem to be enough to cover Dorian's homicidal tracks. At a dinner on the day after Basil's murder, Lord Henry chides Dorian for leaving the festivities too early the previous evening. (He left at eleven.) When asked outright if he then proceeded to the club, Dorian first affirms, then denies doing so. To defend himself in view of Henry's incessant questioning he finally relates all of the details of the contrived situation with Francis. His somewhat incoherent explanation culminates in an offer, reminiscent of someone testifying on a witness stand: "If you want any corroborative evidence on the subject you can ask him." (140) Verbal deceit reinforces situational deceit. Though Wilde's novel furnishes additional examples of Dorian's endless lies, only one more bears mentioning.

James Vane believes he knows the identity of his sister's former suitor and pursues Dorian, cornering him in a darkened archway. Revolver in hand, the sailor intends to kill the man he holds responsible for Sybil's death. "Her death is at your door. I swore I would kill you in return. . . . Make your peace with God, for to-night you are going to die." (146) Crazed with fear,

Dorian first lies in the conventional manner. He promulgates a falsehood and blurts out: “‘I never knew her,’ he stammered. ‘I never heard of her.’” (147) That lame tactic fails to pacify the enraged James Vane. Though visibly terrified, Dorian suddenly devises an escape route and yet again moves ever so rapidly from the verbal to the realm of the situational lie. His youthful face will speak for him, will lie for him. Dorian asks James how many years ago, his sister committed suicide. The sailor answers the question and Dorian replies with a condescending laugh, while issuing a challenge to James Vane as well as an order: “‘Eighteen years! Set me under the lamp and look at my face!’” (147) Paradoxically light, which normally illuminates and/or clarifies, will in this case obscure the truth.

Dim and wavering as was the windblown light, yet it served to show him the hideous error, as it seemed, into which he had fallen, for the face of the man he had sought to kill had all the bloom of boyhood, all the unstained purity of youth. He seemed little more than a lad of twenty summers, hardly older, if older indeed at all, than his sister had been when they had parted so many years ago. (147)

In view of the facts, as presented to him, James can only arrive at a single conclusion. Obviously this man had not ruined his sister's life. (147) Deeply shaken, he staggers away extending an apology and regretting the irreversible mistake he might have made.

Returning for a moment to the topic of light, once again it may be wise to recall one of Scott Peck's reflections. To escape death at the hands of Sybil's brother, Dorian chooses a methodology evil individuals usually avoid precisely because they wish to protect themselves. “The evil hate the light - the light of goodness that shows them up, the light of scrutiny that exposes them, the light of truth that penetrates their deception.”³ But the light from the streetlamp cannot fulfil its usual function, cannot expose Dorian for who he is, for his face has evolved into a lie. It is only the face on the canvas which reveals the truth about the state of his soul, the truth about his contribution to Sybil's suicide and all of his subsequent transgressions. It is also Basil's depiction of Dorian's face and its undeniable message that now concern us.

Before continuing these inquiries, it should be noted that all the lies - either verbal or situational - Dorian conceives, refer either to Basil Hallward's artistic rendering of Dorian or to the man himself, either to the face on the canvas or Dorian's face. But in either case, all lies serve but a single purpose: to hide the Englishman's deteriorating morals, to preserve his pristine image vis-à-vis himself as well as others, to save the self, to save the

self from reproach. Or in Scott Peck's words: "Utterly dedicated to preserving their self-image of perfection, they [the evil] are unceasingly engaged in the effort to maintain the appearance of moral purity."⁴ And once more, the then-practicing psychiatrist emphasizes the relentless energy of those he considers evil. "They are not pain avoiders or lazy people in general. To the contrary, they are likely to exert themselves more than most in the continuing effort to obtain and maintain an image of high respectability."⁵ The following examples should confirm the accuracy of these clinical observations.

Only a month has passed since the portrait's completion and the utterance of Dorian's wish. But the canvas already shows the first sign of aberrant behaviour documenting his precipitous and crushing rejection of Sybil Vane: "the face appeared to him to be a little changed. The expression looked different. One would have said there was a touch of cruelty in the mouth." (72) The moment he arises from the chair, in which he has been pondering the realization that his wish might indeed have been fulfilled, Dorian attempts to shield the picture from view. He "drew a large screen right in front of the portrait. . . ." (74) As he is alone in his library, he can only be hiding the evidence of his demeaning insight from himself. Nevertheless, Dorian does so quickly and decisively. Yet another of Peck's incisive comments seems pertinent: ". . . the lie is designed not so much to deceive others as to deceive themselves. They [evil individuals] cannot or will not tolerate the pain of self-reproach. . . . Some rudimentary form of conscience must precede the act of lying. There is no need to hide unless we first feel that something needs to be hidden."⁶

Dorian now knows that something needs to be hidden. The portrait bears witness to his sins and that undeniable fact must be concealed not only from himself, but also from others. He wonders what might happen if someone else were to see the changed portrait. His response is straightforward. He locks both library doors. (76) In order to study the portrait at close range, Dorian removes the screen temporarily (76), only to replace it, (77) when he realizes that he must allow Lord Henry to enter. The elder man knocks furiously for some moments. After his solitary reflections as well as his exchanges with Henry Wotton, which include some half-hearted regrets, some promises to change for the better, some weighing of his options, Dorian makes a second major decision; he reinforces the wish made only a month earlier.

And, yet, who, that knew anything about Life, would surrender the chance of remaining always young, however fantastic that chance might be, or with what fateful consequences it might be fraught? Besides, was it really

under his control? Had it indeed been prayer that had produced the substitution? . . . But the reason was of no importance. . . . If the picture was to alter, it was to alter. That was all. (84)

In the next breath, he verbalizes for the first time the fusion of two central concepts: the continual desecration of the portrait, which automatically presumes it must be hidden, and his self-preservation. "What did it matter what happened to the coloured image on the canvas? He would be safe. That was everything." (84) To underscore the force of his double-pronged intention: "He drew the screen back into its former place in front of the picture. . . ." (84)

The next morning, the morning after Sybil's death, Basil Hallward pays his friend a visit and not unexpectedly inquires as to why a screen obscures his acknowledged masterpiece. "'Where is it? Why have you pulled the screen in front of it? Let me look at it.'" (87) When Basil asks once more to see his creation, Dorian again refuses. "A cry of terror broke from Dorian Gray's lips, and he rushed between the painter and screen." (88) Though he cannot fathom his friend's negative response to this simple request, Basil harbours no doubt that Dorian's anger exceeds all reasonable limits. "The lad was actually pallid with rage. His hands were clenched, and the pupils of his eyes were like disks of blue fire. He was trembling all over." (88) When the artist blithely assumes (contrary to a decision, he had made earlier) that this particular portrait would be included in an upcoming exhibit in Paris, Dorian begins to formulate a countermove to his feeling of terror. "Was the world going to be shown his secret? Were people to gape at the mystery of his life? That was impossible. Something - he did not know what - had to be done at once." (88) Through some subversive mental manoeuvres, Basil, rather than Dorian, confesses the motivation behind his fascination with the portrait, and gradually Dorian's fear subsides. "The colour came back to his cheeks, and a smile played about his lips. The peril was over. He was safe for the time." (90)

Nevertheless, the two visits of Henry Wotton and Basil Hallward, following so closely upon one another, necessitate practical steps to ensure that the danger not only be mitigated, but obliterated. "The portrait must be hidden away at all costs. He could not run such a risk of discovery again. It had been mad of him to have allowed the thing to remain, even for an hour, in a room to which any of his friends had access." (91) Dorian formulates a concrete plan: as already indicated much earlier in these pages, the picture will be transported from the library to his former play-and schoolroom. The housekeeper produces the key, and Dorian places it in his pocket. (92) Given Dorian's escalating degree of apprehension, it is inconceivable that he will

ever return it to Mrs. Leaf. An embroidered coverlet of purple satin - in days gone by it probably functioned as a pall for the deceased - will now cover the portrait as the screen did before. (92)

Now it was to hide something that had a corruption of its own, worse than the corruption of death itself - something that would breed horrors and yet would never die. What the worm was to the corpse, his sins would be to the painted image on the canvas. They would mar its beauty, and eat away its grace. They would defile it, and make it shameful. (92-93)

For a moment Dorian regrets not telling Basil the motivation for hiding his masterpiece, but that would have meant that he would have acknowledged his sins. The nobleman realizes fully that Basil has his best interests at heart; not only would the artist have encouraged him to resist Henry's deleterious suggestions, but also "the still more poisonous influences that came from his own temperament." (93) And yet Dorian would not or could not resist these destructive promptings. He says so himself: ". . . it was too late now." (93) His decision is made. "There were passions in him that would find their terrible outlet, dreams that would make the shadow of their evil real." (93) He reiterates his decision to continue his moral decline and its inevitable consequences multiple times. Repeatedly he arrives at the same conclusion. "The picture had to be concealed." (95) Again the accuracy of one of Peck's observations seems to be verified. "The wickedness of the evil is not committed directly, but indirectly as a part of this cover-up process."⁷

It may be recalled that Mr. Hubbard requests to see the portrait, while relocating it to the old schoolroom; needless to say, the frame-maker's natural curiosity yet again arouses Dorian's rabid fear of disclosure. "He felt ready to leap upon him and fling him to the ground if he dared to lift the gorgeous hanging that concealed the secret of his life." (96) Nevertheless, as soon as the frame-maker and his assistant leave the premises, he regains his composure. "When the sound of their footsteps had died away, Dorian locked the door, and put the key in his pocket." (96) He concludes the threatening encounter (at least in his eyes it qualifies as such) with a familiar observation: "He felt safe now." (96)

Shortly after the inquest into Sybil Vane's death, Henry presents Dorian with a novel he presumes would fascinate the younger man. "It was the strangest book that he had ever read. It seemed to him that in exquisite raiment, and to the delicate sounds of flutes, the sins of the world were passing in dumb show before him." (97) Though he declares it a "poisonous book" (98), for the ensuing years, Dorian does not escape its negative effects.

“Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that he never sought to free himself from it.” (98) On the contrary, he orders nine more copies. These repeated choices, these incessant forays into the realms of evil take their toll upon his emotional and mental equilibrium. More and more often he finds himself at the mercy “of a nature over which he seemed, at times, to have almost entirely lost control.” (98) Can these decisions, therefore, be classified as choices? The degree of freedom seems to be visibly diminishing.

What has not lessened or in any way been affected, however, is the beauty of his face. Those who would speak ill of him “became silent when Dorian Gray entered the room. There was something in the purity of his face that rebuked them.” (99) But, of course, the painting imprisoned in the schoolroom has deteriorated markedly and long ago laid waste both its comeliness and look of innocence. Repeatedly he returns to the abandoned room and unlocks the door “with the key that never left him now. . . .” (99) Previously it might have been kept elsewhere, perhaps in his private quarters. Now the key feels secure only on his person. That additional protective measure tells us that Dorian’s fear of discovery continues to increase, as the loveliness of face in the portrait continues to deteriorate.

And yet another element enters the equation. His fascination grows not only with his own beauty, but also with the ugliness of his soul, as depicted on the canvas. Comparing the two disparate images aids and abets “his sense of pleasure.” (99) That same sense of pleasure drives him on. “The more he knew, the more he desired to know. He had mad hungers that grew more ravenous as he fed them.” (100) He stands on the threshold of addiction. The more profound the addiction, the less the will is able to discern good judgment from bad.

In other words, our ability to make choices, our freedom, varies from one decision to another. We would prefer to think otherwise; we would prefer to regard ourselves as always equally free to do as we might at any given moment. That qualifies as myth, however, for the facts do not support this theory, this assumption, this delusion. Erich Fromm elucidates this process so beautifully, so clearly.

Each step in life which increases my self-confidence, my integrity, my courage, my conviction also increases my capacity to choose the desirable alternative, until eventually it becomes more difficult for me to choose the undesirable rather the desirable action. On the other hand, each act of surrender and cowardice weakens me, opens the path for more acts of surrender, and eventually freedom is lost. Between the extreme when I can no longer do a wrong act and the other extreme when I have lost my freedom to right

action, there are innumerable degrees of freedom of choice. In the practice of life the degree of freedom to choose is different at any given moment.⁸

The years pass and despite the vast array of treasures in his possession - Dorian collects everything from the profane to the sacred, everything from jewels and embroideries to ecclesiastical vestments - they do not help him "escape, for a season, from the fear that seemed to him at times to be almost too great to be borne." (109) He no longer allows himself to travel abroad, be it to France or northern Africa; rather he elects to remain in England and close to the portrait. He must be able to access it at a moment's notice. Fear places its paralyzing hand upon him once more. What would happen, if someone else might see the shameful and reprehensible portrait? (110) Simple key entry seems insufficient now to the dishevelled schoolroom that encloses his horrible secrets. Bars, placed there at Dorian's request, protect its entrance. (110) Sometimes while entertaining at his country estate, acute apprehension dictates his behaviour and in defiance of all social convention, the nobleman abandons his illustrious guests precipitously. Dorian returns to London "to see that the door had not been tampered with, and that the picture was still there." Just visualizing what might happen were the canvas to be stolen fills him with palpable horror. (110)

Gradually, inexorably, he seems to be losing more and more control. Unbidden another of Scott Peck's insights come to mind. Though the psychiatrist agrees that evil persons are to be feared, he also steadfastly maintains something we may never have considered; "they are also to be pitied. Forever fleeing the light of self-exposure and the voice of their own conscience, they are the most frightened of human beings. They live their lives in sheer terror."⁹ To punish evil individuals, we may wish to banish them to hell; nevertheless Dr. Peck counsels us not to bother. "They need not be consigned to any hell; they are already in it."¹⁰

Except for those calculated measures enacted to ensure Dorian's personal safety, extreme anxiety blots out reason the evening Dorian murders Basil. Even before the two old friends greet each other not far from Dorian's residence, a "strange sense of fear, for which he could not account, came over him." (115) Upon concluding the lengthy accounting of Dorian's supposed misdeeds, that Basil finds so thoroughly difficult to believe, he asks himself several questions. Does he know his friend's character after all? Could Dorian possibly bear the responsibility for the serious transgressions of which he has heard so often? Only seeing his friend's soul would lend Basil the assurance he so desperately needs. Realizing what Basil's request presumes, Dorian turns "almost white from fear." (119)

Though the artist's justifiable outrage at seeing the desecrated and hideous picture moves Dorian to tears, he does not heed Basil's repeated pleas to repent. When he is exhorted to look at the results of his consistent dissipation, Dorian forfeits the last vestiges of control over his emotions. "Dorian Gray glanced at the picture, and suddenly an uncontrollable feeling of hatred for Basil Hallward came over him, as though it had been suggested to him by the image on the canvas, whispered into his ear by those grinning lips." (123) The next lines confirm his utter loss of self-control. "The mad passions of a hunted animal stirred within him. . . ." (123) Not surprisingly some moments later, Dorian stabs Basil to death. (123) Dorian can now be designated a murderer. The hunter becomes the hunted. Man turns into beast. The handsome sovereign, whose every wish equalled everyone else's command as Hallward once noted (19), evolves into the rabid slave.

This act, this irreversible act, serves as a turning point. Or as P. D. James concludes: "Murder is the unique crime, the only one for which we can never make reparation to the victim."¹¹ She continues: "It forces us to confront what we are and what we are capable of being."¹² Indeed, it does. Though he may well desire to be an exception to this, and every other, rule, Dorian Gray is not. From this moment onward, in addition to his omnipresent concern about his safety, three interwoven elements dominate Dorian's psychic downward spiral. 1. His fear escalates into terror. 2. Addicted to his immoral ways, he feels as though he might be going mad. 3. He senses repeatedly that his freedom is being curtailed; he feels as though rather than being the pursuer, he is being pursued.

Before summoning Alan Campbell the morning after the murder, Dorian remains ever vigilant about his appearance. (126) Despite these feeble diversionary tactics so characteristic of the evil, Dorian cannot help recalling the "blood-stained" (125) events of the previous night. "He felt that if he brooded on what he had gone through he would sicken or grow mad." (126) While awaiting the gifted chemist's arrival "a horrible fit of terror came over him. What if Alan Campbell should be out of England?" (128) As Dorian finds himself cornered and the minutes seem to drag on interminably, the tension rises within him. He paces back and forth within his room "looking like a beautiful caged thing." (129) In sensing his paralysis, he epitomizes one of Scott Peck's observations: "We do not become partners to evil by accident. As adults we are not forced by fate to become trapped by an evil power; we set the trap ourselves."¹³ Dorian need only look to himself for the source of his current difficulties; he does indeed set the trap himself.

The greater the tension, the greater the stress, the more likely his mind will deceive him. "The brain had its own food on which it battered, and the imagination, made grotesque by terror, twisted and distorted as a living thing by pain, danced like some foul puppet on a stand. . . ." (129) In his

extreme agitation, he visualizes a certain and disastrous end and becomes ever more immobile. "Its very horror made him stone." (129) The greater the tension, the greater the stress, the more likely not only Dorian, but all of us incline toward evil. Peck continues his reflections on the relationship between stress and evil, stress and goodness.

He who behaves nobly in easy times - a fair weather friend
so to speak - may not be so noble when the chips are down.
Stress is the test for goodness. The truly good are they who
in times of stress do not desert their integrity, their maturity,
their sensitivity. Nobility might be defined as the capacity
not to regress in response to degradation, not to become
blunted in the face of pain, to tolerate the agonizing and
remain intact.¹⁴

What exacerbates the nobleman's dilemma even further is readily apparent; he creates his own stress. Appropriate guilt produces pressure, which serves a redemptive function, if and when it engenders a change of heart.¹⁵ Obviously the willingness to alter his behaviour for the better does not and has never characterized Dorian's response to stress. Despite his heightened state of anxiety, Dorian nevertheless experiences an occasional moment of lucidity, when he seems calmer. "He felt that he was himself again. His mood of cowardice had passed away." (130) Once the valet apprises him of Campbell's arrival, he feels more in control of his responses. Seconds thereafter and before advising Alan of his wishes, Dorian admits, even if only to himself, that he can still reason, can still distinguish right from wrong. "He knew that what he was going to do was dreadful." (130)

Nevertheless the crisis averted, he again deliberately sets those rudimentary moral considerations aside. The skilled chemist does as requested and obliterates the forensic evidence incriminating his former friend. Consequently that same day Dorian resumes the luxuriant lifestyle of the consummate dandy. But, despite the most concerted efforts, he can no longer avoid facing the disparity between his polished, public appearance and the depravity of his soul. "He himself could not help wondering at the calm of his demeanour, and for a moment felt keenly the terrible pleasure of a double life." (135) The oxymoronic "terrible pleasure" already foreshadows the duality Dorian confirms moments later. In order to sustain his cultivated performance, to function on some acceptable level, he must thrust aside, must repress what he wishes so vehemently to ignore. He must defend himself from the repeated assaults of his ever-present conscience and consequently elects to separate and isolate the opposing forces within. Erich

Neumann reflects upon this radical response to both internal and external pressures.

The exclusion becomes even more radical, the dichotomy between the values which the conscious mind espouses and the anti-ethical ones of the subconscious becomes even greater . . . the more his or her conscience makes itself felt.¹⁶

This failure to heed his conscience, to assume an appropriate degree of responsibility for his actions, this defensive splitting - some consider it a primitive manoeuvre¹⁷ - could place Dorian into that rather amorphous spectrum of individuals beset by personality disorders. "How intense must the disturbance be to warrant calling it a disorder?"¹⁸ Among a host of others, that question must be answered before definitive progress can be made in this ever evolving field of inquiry. Does Dorian suffer from ambulatory schizophrenia,¹⁹ as Dr. Peck tentatively suggests, or from borderline personality disorder or a third variant of some psychiatric pathology? At the risk of painting with the proverbial broad brush, it may be wise to remember that it is precisely the difficulties encountered in defining these salient terms, which motivate studies such as this one. Unless we can name a disease, how can we possibly begin to heal the afflicted or help their victims?²⁰

But beyond the speculation, beyond the well-intentioned and exhaustive research, we must not lose sight of a simple truth. To Basil Hallward or Alan Campbell - these are just his most recent victims - the relevant, the exact diagnosis of Dorian's psychic condition doesn't matter. They can ill afford to speculate how strained his nerves may have become. They only know of their own pain and that he caused it. Once again Scott Peck clarifies the central issue. Who can say for certain, if and how the evil suffer? But one fact remains: "They cause suffering."²¹

Another perspective may also shed some light on these issues. Viktor E. Frankl (1905-1997) discusses the parameters of a human being's essential nature in his *Ärztliche Seelsorge*.²² His American contemporary, Abraham H. Maslow (1908-1970), notes the characteristics of self-actualized individuals. Both psychoanalysts maintain that despite their imperfections (for none of them are perfect),²³ healthy, contributing, responsible individuals can just as easily be termed integrated. They manage to resolve dichotomies the less secure, the less discerning, the less mature find so vexing or simply repress.

In these people, the id, the ego and the superego are collaborative and synergic; they do not war with each other

nor are their interests in basic disagreement as they are in neurotic people. So also do the cognitive, the impulsive and the emotional coalesce into an organismic unity. . . .²⁴

In helping to coordinate their inner and outer worlds, self-actualized persons diffuse conflicts particularly those within themselves; they integrate without short-changing. They benefit others, while benefiting themselves. In brief, they are what they claim to be. Duplicity does not become them. Keeping Dorian Gray in mind, another of Maslow's conclusions might shed additional light.

The civil war within the average person between the forces of the inner depths and the forces of defense and control seems to have been resolved in my subjects and they are less split. As a consequence, more of themselves is available for use, for enjoyment, and for creative purposes. They waste less of their time and energy protecting themselves against themselves.²⁵

The last cannot be said of the English aristocrat. He wastes years, perhaps, his entire adulthood protecting himself against himself. No matter the cost to others or to himself (and it is always both), his shadow must not be allowed to interfere with the image of perfection he not only strives to convey, but succeeds in conveying. One of Peck's pivotal insights bears repeating.

The words "image," "appearance," and "outwardly" are crucial to understanding the morality of the evil. While they seem to lack any motivation to *be* good, they intensely desire to appear good. Their "goodness" is all on a level of pretense. It is, in effect, a lie. This is why they are the "people of the lie."²⁶

Dorian manages to project an image commensurate with his station, but only to a point. During the evening the day after Basil's murder, Henry Wotton comments repeatedly and rather bluntly upon the younger man's frayed nerves. The following remarks should be considered a random sampling: "You seemed rather out of sorts at dinner." And: "You are not yourself to-night." (140) When Dorian leaves Lady Narborough's soirée prematurely without offering a cogent explanation, he cannot, as he had done so many times before, regain his composure. "As he drove back to his own house he was conscious that the sense of terror he thought he had strangled had come

back to him. Lord Henry's casual questioning had made him lose his nerves for the moment, and he wanted his nerve still." (141) Dorian does not remain at home. Or more accurately, he cannot remain there. He is determined to strike from his mind the murder just committed. "There were opium-dens, where one could buy oblivion, dens of horror where the memory of old sins could be destroyed by the madness of sins that were new." (142) Though already en route to an ill-reputed section of the harbour, where his "mad craving" (141) will, at least momentarily, be satiated, still Dorian's fears are not allayed. Perhaps someone sees where he is going; more than once he checks to ascertain whether he is being followed. (144)

There are moments, psychologists tell us, when the passion for sin, or what the world calls sin, so dominates a nature, that every fiber of the body, as every cell of the brain, seems to be instinct with fearful impulses. Men and women at such moments lose the freedom of their will. They move to their terrible end as automatons move. Choice is taken from them, and conscience is either killed, or, if it lives at all, lives but to give rebellion its fascination, and disobedience its charm. For all sins, as theologians weary not of reminding us, are sins of disobedience. When the high spirit, that morning-star of evil, fell from heaven, it was as a rebel that he fell. (146)

It is as if the literary genius and the psychoanalyst had collaborated with each other. Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) dies the year Erich Fromm (1900-1980) is born and yet Wilde's observations could easily function as the palimpsest to Fromm's conclusions.

In the practice of life the degree of freedom to choose is different at any given moment. If the degree of freedom to choose the good is great, it needs less effort to choose the good. If it is small, it takes great effort, help from others, and favorable circumstances.²⁷

Basil's murder seriously compromises Dorian's psychic equilibrium; he is not only addicted to his sybaritic lifestyle, but also to drugs. Given his present frame of mind, therefore, his ability to choose qualifies as virtually nil. In view of his habitual responses under stress, any efforts he might make to realize the good would seem totally foreign to him, totally illogical. In a fit of rage, Dorian kills the only individual who tries beyond all odds to help

him. Would these be deemed favourable circumstances? Does the question even need to be asked?

Earlier Dorian wondered whether someone might be following him. The imagined threat becomes reality. James Vane learns Dorian's identity, pursues and attacks him. Sybil's former fiancé reacts as expected. He is consumed by fear, immobilized with terror. (147) Nevertheless Dorian escapes certain death, because his ever-youthful face lies for him.

But he cannot flee from the appropriate punishment forever. A short week subsequent, James Vane locates Dorian at his country estate, while the latter entertains a coterie of guests in his customary lavish style. Dorian becomes so frightened that he promptly loses consciousness and falls to the floor. Though clearly on his own property, upon recovering, his question resumes the theme of his personal security yet again: "'Am I safe here, Harry?'" (152) Despite all manner of assurances, Dorian does not shake his feeling of vulnerability. He cannot bear to be alone and, though Lord Henry advises against doing so, he re-joins the party.

There was a wild recklessness of gaiety in his manner as he sat at the table, but now and then a thrill of terror ran through him when he remembered that, pressed against the window of the conservatory, like a white handkerchief, he had seen the face of James Vane watching him. (152-153)

The following day he does not leave his London home. A "wild terror" suffuses his being. "The consciousness of being hunted, snared, tracked down, had begun to dominate him." (153) Whether he opens or closes his eyes, whether it be his surroundings - natural or man-made - or his thoughts, everything reminds him of lost opportunities, reminds him of James Vane and the debt he is owed: "horror seemed once more to lay its hand upon his heart." (153) In his addled state, his delusions concerning James Vane's whereabouts - for they are nothing less - threaten to blot out reality. Despite the fact that he saw him, Dorian wants to believe that he has nothing to fear from the sailor, so he champions that conclusion; he must champion it in order to retain some small measure of mental stability. "Yes: it had been merely fancy. Sibyl Vane's brother had not come back to kill him. He had sailed away in his ship to founder in some winter sea. From him, at any rate, he was safe." (153) Suffering from militant ignorance, that strategy doesn't work well for illusions in a feverish brain take on a life of their own. He cannot banish the memory of Basil to a ship on a wintry sea and as he contemplates his murder in grotesque detail, he grows "pale with terror." (153) Finally Dorian breaks down and sobs, only to convince himself that he has been justified all along in doing what he did. He does not create victims.

Rather he is one himself; “. . . he had been the victim of an terror-stricken imagination and looked back now on his fears with something of pity and not a little of contempt.” (154)

This example of Dorian’s total inability to reason effectively, to grasp reality for what it is, to overemphasize tangential issues at the expense of vital ones, to forfeit all objectivity and all sense of responsibility, this type of circuitous and consequently fallacious thinking typifies a common response when we are asked to assimilate truths we would rather disavow. When Dr. Peck shares with one of his patients a number of possibly disconcerting and targeted insights concerning her marital relationship, her instantaneous reaction resembles Dorian’s. Sarah initiates a nonsensical diatribe filled with quasi-rebuttals, designed to protect her sick self. The psychoanalyst’s assessment of the session speaks volumes not only about his patient’s issues, but also confirms what we have already surmised about Dorian’s extremely fragile state of mind. “I became frightened that I had made a mistake in confronting Sarah as I listened to her lose control. . . . She probably felt cornered. I had better give her plenty of exit space so that she might pull herself together again.”²⁸

After a hiatus of three days, Dorian does pull himself together again and finally allows himself to leave his residence. This effort signifies a resurrection, even if temporary, for Dorian, as he regains at least a fragment of his former psychic equilibrium. Nevertheless, the respite from his conscience, from himself, does not, cannot last. In mid-morning he joins a shooting-party. (153-154) Just after the accidental death of James Vane - though Dorian does not yet know the victim’s name - he begins to hallucinate and mistakes the gardener for someone pursuing him. In replying to Henry’s assurances that all will be well, he admits: “It is the coming of Death that terrifies me. Its monstrous wings seem to wheel in the leaden air around me. Good heavens! don’t you see a man moving behind the trees there, watching me, waiting for me?” (156) Soon he becomes exasperated with all and everyone within his purview and that includes himself. He still feels threatened. How could he escape? He cannot seem to extricate himself from his obsession regarding the safekeeping of his person. Perhaps security can be found on the water, away from any place where one can be reached too easily? ““On a yacht one is safe.”” (156) When the elder man speculates how fascinating it might be to make the acquaintance of a murderer, Henry assails some last remnant of psychic stability Dorian still commands. He almost faints and admits that his ““nerves are dreadfully out of order.”” (157) As he had done before, he leaves his guests without warning, but fails to find tranquillity in his quarters either; “. . . Dorian Gray was lying on a sofa, with terror in every tingling fibre of his body.” (158) He cannot abide remaining in the countryside another moment and makes immediate preparations to

leave Selby Royal for London. When he realizes that Sir Geoffrey had indeed shot James Vane, only then does Dorian's tension lessen noticeably, only then does he dare to loosen his stranglehold on vigilance. "He stood there for some minutes looking at the dead body. As he rode home, his eyes were full of tears, for he knew he was safe." (159) Perhaps Dorian's fear has finally been reduced to more manageable proportions.

Basil Hallward has been murdered; James Vane has been shot; Alan Campbell commits suicide. (161, 168) Only one reminder, only one witness, deafening in its muteness, remains to cast aspersions against Dorian Gray. It is the portrait. Were it to be obliterated, it could no longer terrorize him, no longer drive him from place to place both physically and metaphorically and no longer function ". . . like conscience to him. Yes, it had been conscience." His resolve is clear. "He would destroy it." (169) With whatever shred of freedom left to him, he chooses what seems the easier way to regain even a tenuous foothold in a less tormented life. Sarah's husband, Hartley, also chose the easier way.

Dimly aware that he was caught in a dreadful trap, he obsessed back and forth between the two easiest ways to extricate himself: to kill Sarah or to kill himself. But he was too lazy to even consider the one legitimate escape route open to him: the obvious, the more difficult path of psychological independence.²⁹

To confess would have been the more obvious, the more difficult path for Dorian. When judged by a single standard, i.e., how assiduously he guards the portrait, he represents the diametric opposite of a lazy individual. In fact these incessant manoeuvres virtually consume the entire novel. They commence in chapter seven (74) and end only with Dorian's death on the penultimate page of the novel's final chapter: chapter twenty. (169) Evil persons "are not pain avoiders or lazy people in general. To the contrary, they are likely to exert themselves more than most in their continuing effort to obtain and maintain an image of high respectability. . . . It is only one particular kind of pain they cannot tolerate: the pain of their own conscience, the pain of the realization of their own sinfulness and imperfection."³⁰ He cannot give his conscience its due; never has he done so and he cannot do so now. He cannot give his shadow its due.

The shadow is a moral problem, which challenges every dimension of the ego, for no one can become conscious of the shadow without a significant degree of moral decisiveness. For in acknowledging the shadow, the dark

aspects of the personality must be perceived as real. This act is the indispensable bedrock for every sort of self-recognition and consequently considerable resistance is usually encountered. Should self-recognition be used as a psychotherapeutic tool, then that would generally assume some tedious work, encompassing long periods of time.³¹

How can Dorian possibly undertake such a labour-intensive and protracted endeavour? He has evolved into an “uncorrectable” grab bag of sin;³² to reverse course would cost way too much. At the very least, he would have to acknowledge that he “wasted energy and time.”³³ Instead, he asks himself those haunting questions meant to help him evade his just punishment. “But this murder - was it to dog him all his life? Was he always to be burdened by his past? Was he really to confess?” (169) His answer is straightforward, commensurate with what we expect, absolutely logical within its context. “Never.” (169) His decision is final for he makes it not once but many, many times. In destroying his conscience, he will destroy himself. Though not lacking in intelligence, that connection he does not understand, let alone acknowledge; the evil generally do not. The oft quoted, but perhaps frequently misunderstood, Biblical admonition assumes new meaning. ““For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.””³⁴ In the unforgettable, the final, lines of his only novel, Oscar Wilde summarizes that insight more concretely. “Lying on the floor was a dead man, in evening dress, with a knife in his heart. He was withered, wrinkled, and loathsome of visage. It was not till they examined the rings that they recognized who it was.” (170) In other words, he who would destroy others destroys himself. That ancient wisdom, that ancient law indelibly written on our hearts, even Dorian Gray could only ignore at his peril. Though he attempted to take the law into his own hands,³⁵ he does not prove the exception. Whatever its stripe or type, live by the lie, you die by the lie. It is as simple as that.

Notes

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6. Ibid., pp. 75-76.

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7. Ibid., p. 76.
 8. Erich Fromm, *The Heart of Man: Its Genius for Good and Evil*, 1964, Harper, New York, 1987, p. 136.
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 17. Otto Kernberg, *Severe Personality Disorders: Psychotherapeutic Strategies*, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, London, 1984, p. 15.
 18. Ibid., p. 77.
 19. Peck, p. 128-129. For in-depth studies of the various mental disorders at issue and an historical overview of the difficulties inherent in classifying them correctly for treatment purposes, the following can be consulted. Listed in chronological order are: Joseph D. Lichtenberg and Joseph William Slap, 'Notes on the Concept of Splitting and the Defense Mechanism of the Splitting of Representations,' *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, Harold P. Blum (ed), vol. 21, International Universities Press, New York, 1973, pp. 772-787; Otto F. Kernberg, 'The Structural Diagnosis of Borderline Personality Organization,' *Borderline Personality Disorders: The Concept, the Syndrome, the Patient*, Peter Hartocollis (ed), International Universities Press, New York, 1977, pp. 87-121; —, *Severe Personality Disorders: Psychotherapeutic Strategies*, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, London, 1984, pp. 15, 77; Frank W. Putnam, *Diagnosis and Treatment of Multiple Personality Disorder*, Guilford Press, New York, London, 1989; Richard S. E. Keefe and Philip D. Harvey, *Understanding Schizophrenia*, Free Press, New York, 1994; 'Borderline Personality Disorder,' 'Schizophrenia Spectrum and Other Psychotic Disorders,' *American Psychiatric Association, Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Fifth Edition. Arlington, VA, American Psychiatric Association, 2013.
 20. Ibid., p. 86.
 21. Ibid., p. 124.

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22. Viktor E. Frankl, *Ärztliche Seelsorge: Grundlagen der Logotherapie und Existenzanalyse*, 4th edn., 1987, Fischer, Frankfurt, 1991, pp. 46-51.
 23. Abraham H[arold] Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, 2nd edn., 1954, Harper, New York, London, 1970, pp. 151, 174-176, 200.
 24. Ibid., p. 179.
 25. —, *Toward a Psychology of Being*, 2nd edn., Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York, 1982, p. 141.
 26. Peck, p. 75.
 27. Fromm, p. 136.
 28. Peck, pp. 116, 128, 129.
 29. Ibid., p. 118.
 30. Ibid., p. 77.
 31. C[arl] G[ustav] Jung, 'Aion: Beiträge zur Symbolik des Selbst,' *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 9, Lilly Jung-Merker, Elisabeth Rüd (eds), Walter, Olten, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1976, p. 17.
 32. Peck, p. 72.
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 34. *The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition*, Matthew 16: 25, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999.
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Chapter Eight: Refusal to Heed Criticism

**They have gone down into the depths.
You led them there.**

The consistent inability to tolerate legitimate criticism constitutes the *eighth* and final sign of individual evil. Two scenes in Wilde's novel furnish innumerable examples of Dorian Gray's refusal to acknowledge and subsequently integrate criticisms levelled against him into his psyche. These two major scenes will demonstrate his overwhelming unwillingness to heed advice, no matter how well meant, to alter his destructive ways. In other words, the protagonist lacks a self-correcting mechanism.¹

On the eve of the younger man's thirty-eighth birthday and shortly before intending to leave England, Basil Hallward calls on Dorian with a single agenda on his mind. No longer can the artist deny the negative comments about Dorian circulating around London, nor can he ignore them, much as he would like to do so. Above all else, he would like Dorian's reassurances that these persistent accusations are unsubstantiated, do not merit further consideration; Basil would like to hear that Dorian remains a decent man, as he ardently wishes him to be. "I want you to lead such a life as will make the world respect you. I want you to have a clean name and a fair record." (118) Basil stands at a crossroads. He either believes the rumours about Dorian's reprehensible conduct, or he subscribes to his preferred and positive version of his friend's life. He cannot do both.

In order to distinguish truth from falsehood, his extensive critique progresses through five phases.

1. Basil initiates the unprecedented encounter in assuring Dorian that he is seriously concerned about the younger man's moral welfare, cares for him deeply and consequently refuses to give credence to what he hears. Basil tells his friend of his open mind as well as his good will. (116, 119) Or to phrase it another way: he does not come looking for problems. On the contrary.

2. Basil attempts to assist Dorian in separating the important from the unimportant. "Of course you have your position, and your wealth, and all that kind of thing. But position and wealth are not everything." (117)

To the casual observer, these dual overtures may seem extraneous to the core of Basil's arguments. But they are not. Had the artist only listed Dorian's transgressions and not attempted to assure him of his objectivity as well as his genuine concern, Dorian's negative reaction could more easily be understood, even if not condoned. "Normally a person does not become angry when something he has done or said is criticized, provided the

criticism is fair and not made with hostile intent.”² However, this consoling preamble does not bear the intended fruit. Dorian becomes angry, very angry.

3. Basil proceeds to give an exhaustive account of Dorian’s consistent deleterious effects on both the men and women within his purview. The Duke of Berwick and Lord Staveley now ostracize Dorian; they didn’t initially. What about the boy in the Guards, who took his life, Basil insists on asking. Sir Henry Ashton, Adrian Singleton and Lord Kent’s son and their lamentable situations are also accorded mention. Among sundry others, the list includes not only Lady Gwendolen, Lord Wotton’s sister, but also the wife of Lord Gloucester, one of Basil’s most cherished friends at Oxford. (117-119) “‘He showed me a letter that his wife had written to him when she was dying alone in her villa. . . .Your name was implicated in the most terrible confession I ever read.’” (119) This grimmest of ledgers testifies to an unbroken series of transgressions ranging from drug addiction and adultery to motivating suicide and everything in between. These sins do not remain without consequences. Of necessity, they engender not only private guilt, but also public shame. Even Lady Gwendolen’s “‘children are not allowed to live with her.’” (118)

4. Basil touches upon how this unrelenting dissipation affects Dorian himself. “‘Then there are other stories - stories that you have been seen creeping at dawn out of dreadful houses and slinking in disguise into the foulest dens in London.’” (118) Nor does the incredulous artist neglect to question Dorian’s conduct at Selby Royal, which apparently leaves much to be desired from a moral viewpoint. (118)

5. The final phase. Judgments, reproaches and suggestions punctuate this sombre catalogue at regular intervals only to end in a plea and the most desperate of prayers.

Basil describes Dorian’s alleged reprehensible lifestyle in unmistakable terms: dreadful, (116) vile, degraded, hideous, horrible (117), corrupt (120) and levels one charge after another against him.

“One has a right to judge of a man by the effect he has over his friends. Yours seem to lose all sense of honour, of goodness, of purity. You have filled them with a madness for pleasure. They have gone down into the depths. You led them there. Yes: you led them there. . . .” (118)

And again: “‘You have a wonderful influence. Let it be for good, not for evil. They say that you corrupt every one with whom you become intimate, and that it is quite sufficient for you to enter a house, for shame of some kind to follow after.’” (118-119) These two examples represent a far greater number.

The horrific tally completed, Basil begs his friend to refute the damning innuendos:

“You must give some answer to these horrible charges that are made against you. If you tell me that they are absolutely untrue from beginning to end, I shall believe you. Deny them, Dorian, deny them! Can’t you see what I am going through? My God! Don’t tell me that you are bad, and corrupt and shameful.” (120)

Once Basil sees the highly disfigured portrait and begins reluctantly, very reluctantly, to process intellectually as well as emotionally what its hideousness implies, he labels the man he considered his ideal for far too long “a satyr” (122) and profoundly regrets his former attitude towards him. “‘Christ! what a thing I must have worshipped! It has the eyes of a devil.’” (122) This unequivocal realization engenders yet another of Basil’s accusations aimed squarely at Dorian. “‘My God! if it is true,’ he exclaimed, ‘and this is what you have done with your life, why, you must be worse than those who talk against you fancy you to be!’” (122)

At his wit’s end and emotionally drained, Basil shields his eyes from the canvas in covering his face with his hands. Nevertheless, the sound of Dorian weeping accosts his ears. In a final effort to reach his friend in his acute distress, Hallward exhorts him to join him in prayer, modelling the words for him. “‘What is it that one was taught to say in one’s boyhood? ‘Lead us not into temptation. Forgive us our sins. Wash away our iniquities.’ Let us say that together.’” (122) Dorian rejects outright all such invocations.

As he considers it too late to redirect his ill-begotten and entrenched ways, only a single option remains. Or so he believes. He must destroy the one who possesses the conviction or the gall to remind him of his failings; “he loathed the man who was seated at the table, more than in his whole life he had ever loathed anything. . . . He rushed at him, and dug the knife into the great vein that is behind the ear, crushing the man’s head down on the table, and stabbing again and again.” (123) The hatred he feels towards himself he could not acknowledge; he must thrust it outward, project it onto Basil and kill him instead. The evil do this routinely. They “attack others instead of facing their own failures.”³

Peck continues: “Spiritual growth requires the acknowledgement of one’s need to grow. If we cannot make that acknowledgement, we have no option except to attempt to eradicate the evidence of our imperfection.”⁴ As Basil Hallward repeatedly and, one must admit, courageously addresses Dorian’s radical as well as persistent failures, the distorted logic of his evil mind asserts itself in retaliation; the artist must be attacked, must be killed.

Paradoxically enough, in the perverse attempt to eradicate the evidence of his sins, in murdering Basil Hallward, Dorian adds a grievous (and, as already mentioned, irreversible) transgression to the endless, the infamous roster.

The second major incident of Dorian's not only regrettable, but also absolute, reluctance to give legitimate criticism its due follows immediately upon Basil's murder. Though he promised himself never to enter Dorian's house again, Alan Campbell does so at the former's insistence. In the course of explaining why he requires the skills of a chemist, but before Dorian can fully articulate his wishes, Alan interrupts him and criticizes him in rather blunt terms. "Keep your horrible secrets to yourself. They don't interest me any more." (130) Only five years prior, these two had frequented each other's company, attending first-rate musical performances at every opportunity. For the dedicated chemist and the gifted musician - Alan excels at both disciplines - ". . . Dorian Gray was the type of everything that is wonderful and fascinating in life." (129) Now Alan insults him and, as soon as Dorian delineates the precise nature of his request, calls him a mad man four times within the space of seconds. (131) While adamantly refusing to comply with his former friend's demands, Alan continues to vilify him. "What is it to me what devil's work you are up to?" (131) And once more: "I will have absolutely nothing to do with it. I don't care what shame comes on you. You deserve it all. I should not be sorry to see you disgraced, publicly disgraced." (131) In the hope that the matter is settled at last, the justifiably frustrated chemist concludes his refusals: "It is insane of you to ask me." (132)

Dorian's countermoves prove as swift as they are damaging. He threatens Alan with blackmail. Though we do not know the contents of the letter, Dorian would send (it is already addressed), were Alan not to comply, we do learn of his reaction. "As he read it, his face became ghastly pale, and he fell back in his chair. A horrible sense of sickness came over him. He felt as if his heart was beating itself to death in some empty hollow." (132) Dorian justifies these attacks on Alan in straightforward terms. "You were stern, harsh, offensive. You treated me as no man has ever dared to treat me - no living man, at any rate." (132) Dorian cannot, will not tolerate this pummeling of his ego, this pointed assault on his self-image. Without hesitation, he also acknowledges that the last time - it was just yesterday - someone attempted to contradict, let alone reproach Dorian Gray, he responded with a fatal blow.

In his encounter with Alan Campbell, Dorian seems to possess the upper hand. Evidently he knows the exact nature of his estranged friend's cardinal sin - Alan does not refute it - and can consequently use that information against him. Yet from another perspective how fragile, how inflexible the egos of the evil seem to be! They seem to believe that they

would not survive incorporating even the smallest of behavioural modifications urged upon them. Of course, neither Hallward nor Campbell suggests small modifications.

In reflecting upon one of his earliest cases, Dr. Peck draws this conclusion.

I doubt that Bobby's parents deliberately wanted to kill Stuart or him. I suspect if I had gotten to know them well enough, I would have found their murderous behavior totally dictated by an extreme form of self-protectiveness which invariably sacrificed others rather than themselves.⁵

The evil also seem to believe that any other- and/or self-admonishment necessitates a monumental realignment of their priorities, a restructuring synonymous with so great a sacrifice that it may well be beyond any scope they are willing to consider, let alone enact.

Earlier it is stated that Dorian seems to have the greater advantage in this situation. As if to reassure himself of the advantage he already possesses - enough is never enough for these perpetually insecure persons,⁶ Dorian twice tells the visibly distraught chemist: "Yes, it is my turn to dictate terms, Alan." (132) His visceral response testifies to the agony visited upon him.

A groan broke from Campbell's lips, and he shivered all over. The ticking of the clock on the mantelpiece seemed to him to be dividing Time into separate atoms of agony, each of which was too terrible to borne. He felt as if an iron ring was being slowly tightened round his forehead, as if the disgrace with which he was threatened had already come upon him. The hand upon his shoulder weighed like a hand of lead. It was intolerable. It seemed to crush him. (132-133)

In his immolating desperation, Alan hurls one more and perhaps his most pointed accusation in Dorian's direction. "You have gone from corruption to corruption, and now you have culminated in crime." (133) Before the chemist accedes to the wishes of the pathologically determined nobleman, Dorian manages to deliver the coup de grâce and predictably devastates Alan. A few weeks hence, the news of his suicide makes its way around the English capital. (161, 168)

In defence of his sick self, Dorian commits murder and prompts a suicide. It should be recalled that his downward trajectory begins with Sybil Vane's suicide; her tragic end leads step by inevitable step to her brother's

so-called accidental death. Though Sybil dies at her own hand, Dorian motivates her to take her life. Basil creates the portrait, which so entrances its subject upon completion; nevertheless Dorian stabs the painter to death. Alan pulls the trigger of the gun that kills him. Sir Geoffrey's bullet finds James, because he pursues his sister's fiancé in order to avenge her. In each of these cases, Dorian contributes directly or indirectly to each of the four premature deaths. In view of these facts, only now can we fully appreciate the accuracy of Alan Campbell's scathing assessment of his former friend's life. "'You have gone from corruption to corruption, and now you have culminated in crime.'" (133) Indeed.

Dorian obviously rejects, and violently so, any criticism that others draw to his attention. Does he also react poorly when he recriminates himself? Does he, in fact, recriminate himself? The realization that he does so may strike us as unexpected.

There were moments, indeed, at night, when lying sleepless in his own delicately-scented chamber, or in the sordid room of the little ill-famed tavern near the Docks, which, under an assumed name, and in disguise, it was his habit to frequent, he would think of the ruin he had brought upon his soul. . . . (99-100)

Unfortunately these moments, which could be redemptive, do not evolve into turning points, do not prompt him to redirect his course for the better, to seek moral high ground. Rather, he would think of the damage he had done to his soul, "with a pity that was all the more poignant because it was purely selfish." (100) Furthermore, these acts of pseudo self-recrimination seldom take place. (100)

Roger's parents do not even pretend to reproach themselves. Not a single word of doubt or self-recrimination can be detected in the exchanges between them and Scott Peck.⁷ No matter how often the psychiatrist insists on their blatant and pervasive lack of concern for their son, they deflect, though with seemingly plausible rationalizations, each and every one of his considered recommendations.

"Roger wanted to go to boarding school. You refused him without looking into the matter further. I advised that you take him to see Dr. Levenson. You rejected that advice. And now, when he was rewarded for his own role in community affairs, you refused him his reward without even thinking of the effect it might have on him. . . . I am saying that from a psychological point of view your

behavior indicates that on an unconscious level you have a good deal of animosity toward him.”⁸

Of course, their responses to the psychoanalyst’s critique are not as obvious or as violent as Dorian’s had been to the challenges of either Basil or Alan. Theirs are far subtler, far more cunning, do not seem as ruthless, do not begin to qualify as criminal; yet they are damaging beyond measure to Roger (and to them). Peck repeatedly describes Roger’s parents as “articulate, impeccably dressed,”⁹ smooth,¹⁰ urbane,¹¹ gracious,¹² amiable,¹³ intelligent, educated and “finely tuned to social nuances.”¹⁴ How could it be otherwise? Those are the means whereby they establish as well as maintain their privileged position in society.¹⁵

Dorian’s public persona elicits a similar description and reminds us of Dr. Peck’s conclusion that the evil, more than most folks, are concerned with their appearance vis-à-vis others and will, despite the occasional glance inward, spare themselves no effort, none whatsoever, in projecting a flawless image.¹⁶

Yet he was not really reckless, at any rate in his relations to society. Once or twice every month during the winter, and on each Wednesday evening while the season lasted, he would throw open to the world his beautiful house and have the most celebrated musicians of the day to charm his guests with the wonders of their art. His little dinners, in the settling of which Lord Henry always assisted him, were noted as much for the careful selection and placing of those invited, as for the exquisite taste shown in the decoration of the table, with its subtle symphonic arrangements of exotic flowers, and embroidered cloths, and antique plate of gold and silver. (100)

Only in one regard are evil people lazy. “It is only one particular kind of pain they cannot tolerate: the pain of their own conscience, the pain of the realization of their own sinfulness and imperfection.”¹⁷ They prove too indolent to reconsider their actions, to undertake the work necessary in order to develop into morally upright and discerning human beings.¹⁸ “[T]hat sloth which is boredom with divine things, the inertia that cannot be troubled to repent. . . .”¹⁹ These two closely related deficiencies characterize the evil.

To look at these issues from another perspective, one could surmise that evil individuals absolutely refuse to share our nature, our flawed human nature. They wish to be special, outside the moral law. However, to be human means to be flawed. There are no exceptions. We all sin, we all tend

to perform below our optimum, once in a while, if not more than once in while.²⁰ “Of course, there are crimes of greater and lesser magnitude. It is a mistake, however, to think of sin or evil as a matter of degree.”²¹ Paradoxically, whatever its parameters, in the acknowledgement of our sinfulness lies redemption. If we acknowledge our shortcomings and simultaneously a standard above and beyond ourselves, we already embark on the road to salvation. How do I become a decent, a productive, a benevolent person? The answer to that eternal question may be simpler than first assumed. Who could have guessed?

Notes

1. M[organ] Scott Peck, *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1983, p. 72.
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3. Peck, p. 74.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., p. 75.
6. Erich H. Fromm, *Escape from Freedom*, 1941, Henry Holt, New York, 1994, p. 115.
7. Peck, pp. 87-107.
8. Ibid., p. 100.
9. Ibid., p. 88.
10. Ibid., pp. 90, 100.
11. Ibid., pp. 89, 97, 99, 102.
12. Ibid., p. 105.
13. Ibid., p. 102.
14. Ibid., p. 105.
15. Ibid., pp. 100, 105.
16. Ibid., p. 75.
17. Ibid., p. 77.
18. Ibid.
19. Gerald Vann, *The Pain of Christ and the Sorrow of God*, 1947, Templegate, Springfield, IL, 1954, p. 55.
20. Peck, pp. 70-71. It may be of interest to note that upon the completion of his greeting, the presider invites the congregation to acknowledge their failures. Within seconds of beginning the Mass in the Roman Catholic Rite, the worshipers are reminded of their sinfulness: “. . . let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.” They may immediately respond in reciting one of several versions of the Confiteor, which may be intoned with the words: “I confess. . . .” During the course

of the Holy Sacrifice, either the priest or the congregation mentions sin or its equivalent, i.e., trespasses, approximately twenty times. 'The Order of Mass,' *The Roman Missal*, 3rd edn., United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC, 2011, pp. 511-689.

21. Ibid., p. 70.

Afterword

The world is a beautiful and terrible place. Deeds of horror are committed every minute and in the end those we love die. If the screams of all earth's living creatures were one scream of pain, surely it would shake the stars. But we have love. It may seem a frail defence against the horrors of the world, but we must hold fast and believe in it, for it is all that we have.

P. D. James, *The Private Patient*

A glance at the table of contents suffices and immediately the major characteristics of evil individuals will come into focus. The longest chapters are devoted to victimization, narcissism and lying. Or to phrase it another way, even if every last interpretive word is not weighed nor each endnote examined, the evidence becomes overwhelming. Evil individuals consistently treat others poorly, are exclusively interested in themselves and their welfare, are laws unto themselves and ceaselessly attempt to hide their strident failings behind a plethora of half-truths and total fabrications. They are driven to project a thoroughly positive self-image at considerable variance with what holds sway beneath the surface. Usually their disguise cannot be penetrated.

Does it strike us as surprising therefore that they experience difficulty in establishing, let alone maintaining, interpersonal relationships of even the most elementary sort? How often do the media furnish yet another report about an individual now identified as an inveterate abuser, who kept to himself, interacted with the neighbours sporadically if at all, seemed rather quiet, and created the impression of someone decent though downright taciturn? By the time the damage is disclosed, his victims have been suffering far too long. And what about those who perpetrate large-scale suffering that does not qualify as criminal in the legal sense simply because the effects are not as visible? We need only remember Roger and his parents.¹

At the outset of this undertaking, it was stated that the probable causes for this consistently malevolent behaviour would not be examined. And indeed they were not. Nevertheless, one cannot help but speculate about such issues. Dürrenmatt never speaks about the formative years of Fritz Emmenberger. We learn nothing of his upbringing or his family, nuclear or extended. However, we are told that his verifiable sadistic tendencies could already be observed in medical school. (144) Oscar Wilde, on the other hand, divulges a myriad of details about Dorian Gray's childhood. His maternal grandfather did not approve of his son-in-law and bribed someone to insult and subsequently engage him in a duel; Dorian's father was killed shortly after the wedding and his mother died within the year. (31) Though affluent, the child was raised by the same individual who arranged his father's death:

Lord Kelso. For once Henry Wotton's reflections do justice to Dorian's earliest situation and its emotional ramifications. "The mother snatched away by death, the boy left to solitude and the tyranny of an old and loveless man." (33) Does this set of circumstances more often than not encourage later narcissistic behaviour? As adults, do we seek what we did not receive as children, even if we don't realize it?

Erich Fromm suggests an answer. The psychoanalyst readily concedes that a multitude of forces influence our decisions: environmental, hereditary and constitutional. For instance, he posits that someone who is naturally shy "may become either overshy, retiring, passive, discouraged, or a very intuitive person, for example, a gifted poet, a psychologist, a physician."² Obviously, the same trait can yield highly diverse outcomes. Fromm further believes that the identical reasoning can explain the results of a more problematical trait like sadism. For a son subjected to a sadistic father, for example, he predicts two possibilities: the person develops into a sadist, or he cultivates an effective counter-strategy to sadism, "which makes him incapable of acting cruelly, and also makes him highly sensitive of any cruelty on the part of others or himself. . . ."³ There is one option not open to him, however - "he can never become a person *indifferent* to sadism."⁴

But no matter the multi-faceted tenor of the early years, is there anyone who does not know that beating even a dog senseless will not bring about more desirable behaviour, is not the right thing to do? Some folks, however, do wrong simply "to exercise the freedom of his or her will."⁵ (Students are generally taken aback when I tell them that even God cannot make them love Him.) The strong among us are those who do the right thing simply because it is the right thing, who exercise the freedom of their wills, despite the less-than-perfect circumstances of long ago or of the present. And these circumstances are always less than desirable, for our vision - whether we like or not - always remains impaired.

In addition, no one matures in the perfect family. Some of us not only recognize, but also attempt to compensate for, the shortcomings of our parents and their parents. We cannot manage the second without doing the first. We cannot change a pattern of being and doing without first acknowledging not only its presence, but also its effects. And of course, even while altering an inherited pattern or discarding it altogether, we add our own myopia to the mix. No doubt there are individuals who grow up in far less than so-called ideal surroundings and who, nevertheless or precisely due to them, raise well-adjusted children and/or who make other demonstrably significant contributions. We do not know enough about Emmenberger in this regard to pass judgment. Samuel Hungertobel recalls that, during medical school, none of their classmates would have numbered among his friends; even later Emmenberger never seemed to befriend anyone. (145)

Was there any one in Dorian Gray's life who championed his best interests, when it still mattered, when he might still have mended his destructive ways? Doubtlessly Basil Hallward belongs on that roster. Yet as we remember when he dares to approach Dorian with his justified concerns, the nobleman's response proves as swift as it does brutal, and Basil pays with his life. (123)

Though not all narcissists are evil, why, as was stated some chapters ago, are all evil people narcissists? What is it they seek with such vengeance, when they declare both consciously and subconsciously that they want it all however and whenever they please? To be happy, would most likely be their reply. Neither Emmenberger nor Dorian Gray achieves that goal. Neither lacks the will nor the financial means - if that's what it takes - to reach any goal he envisions, and yet neither in his eternal restlessness even manages to find a transitory contentment.

Christopher Lasch in *The Culture of Narcissism* notes several characteristics of the ego-centred person. "He extols cooperation and teamwork while harboring deeply antisocial impulses. He praises respect for rules and regulations in the secret belief that they do not apply to him."⁶ Lasch might as well be describing Emmenberger. How many of his victims, e.g., Nehle and Marlok, did he coerce into furthering his criminal pursuits? In what excruciating detail does he explain to Bärlach his motivation for transcending the moral parameters, which pertain to every one else, but not to him. The best-selling author might also have had Dorian Gray in mind when referring to today's self-consumed individual. "Acquisitive in the sense that his cravings have no limits, he does not accumulate goods and provisions against the future, . . . but demands immediate gratification and lives in a state of restless, perpetually unsatisfied desire."⁷ Did both protagonists mistake pleasure for happiness? Or is that too facile an explanation for their all too common misconception? Both tried to achieve happiness directly, and such endeavours are always destined to fail. Viktor Frankl makes that observation in his usual lucid fashion; ". . . we see how misguided all striving for happiness is, how the desperate attempt to achieve happiness, to achieve pleasure as such, is condemned to miscarry."⁸ Any attempt to do so forfeits immediacy; by its very nature, spontaneity cannot be produced at will. It wouldn't be much of a gift if it could be had for the asking.

Perhaps they misunderstood another vital truth, yet another paradox encountered in this study of evil fraught with such conundrums. "*Narcissism destroys individuality, contradictory though that seems.*"⁹ Rollo May considers this insight so crucial to understanding the dilemmas of our age that it is he who insists on the italics.

One more point. Perhaps these folks are not so much interested in happiness as in love. They want what all of us want: to be affirmed and

cherished, even when we realize that at times we scarcely deserve to be. But who can love these exploitative and frequently downright mean people? Who can love someone who refuses to reveal a significant portion of themselves? Who can reach them in their self-imposed exile and love them despite themselves?

Though at first glance this study would seem to address only the problem of evil, perhaps, on further reflection, it also looks at the other side of the proverbial coin and tells us something about goodness, about happiness. Though the two are obviously not identical. Even Lord Henry, acknowledges the difference: “. . . when we are good we are not always happy.” (63)

Once again, Viktor Frankl suggests a compelling answer to the perennial question of evil. As his insight was tested repeatedly in the crucible of a concentration camp, in the crucible of evil incarnate, we might do well to consider it.

And as we stumbled on for miles, slipping on icy spots, supporting each other time and again, dragging one another up and onward, nothing was said. But we both knew; each of us was thinking of his wife. Occasionally I looked at the sky, where stars were fading and the pink light of the morning was beginning to spread behind a dark bank of clouds. But my mind clung to my wife's image, imagining it with an uncanny acuteness. I heard her answering me, saw her smile, her frank and encouraging look.

A thought transfixed me: for the first time in my life I saw the truth as it is set into song by so many poets, proclaimed as the final wisdom by so many thinkers. The truth - that love is the ultimate and the highest goal to which man can aspire. Then I grasped the meaning of the greatest secret that human poetry and human thought and belief have to impart: *the salvation of man is through love and in love.*¹⁰

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin seconds the motion of his contemporary in his immortal words, penned in February 1934. “Someday, after (harnessing) space, the winds, the tides, and gravity, we will harness for God the energies of love. - And then, for the second time in the history of the World, Mankind will have discovered Fire.”¹¹

A caveat. The same eight characteristics were examined twice. Such scrutiny is bound to result in some redundancies. Some chapters can almost be considered independent units; I would not expect the reader to seek out additional supporting information for a contention or other on an earlier page, consequently the inevitable overlap will have occurred. Some may find this methodology helpful, others may not.

Notes

1. M[organ] Scott Peck, *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1983, pp. 87-103.
2. Erich Fromm, *The Heart of Man: Its Genius for Good and Evil*, 1964, Harper, New York, 1987, p. 140.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Peck, p. 82. For additional insights, concerning the relationship between God's power and our free will, consult this same text: p. 78.
6. Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations*, Norton, New York, 1979, p. xvi.
7. Ibid.
8. Viktor E. Frankl, *The Doctor and the Soul: From Psychotherapy to Logotherapy*, Richard and Clara Winston (trans), Bantam, New York, 1969, p. 129.
9. Rollo May, *The Cry for Myth*, Norton, New York, 1991, p. 113.
10. Viktor E. Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning: An Introduction to Logotherapy*. Part One, Ilse Lasch (trans), Washington Square Press, New York, 1963, pp. 58 – 59.
11. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *Les Directions de l'avenir*, Seuil, Paris, 1973, p. 92. "Quelque jour, après l'éther, les vents, les marées, la gravitation, nous capterons, pour Dieu, les énergies de l'amour. - Et alors, une deuxième fois dans l'histoire du Monde, l'Homme aura trouvé le Feu."

Epilogue:

A Literary and Psychological Paradigm of Group Evil: Max Frisch's *Andorra*

As noted at this monograph's outset, prior to the publication of M. Scott Peck's *People of the Lie*, the diagnosis of evil had never entered the psychiatric lexicon. In acknowledging the attempts of those working to eradicate individual evil, the psychiatrist concludes his discussion of this potentially fatal disorder with this observation: "It is an unusual and rewarding privilege to encounter evil in a form in which it can be isolated and cast out."¹ By contrast, the task of those hoping to vanquish group evil is more difficult, for group evil is not only more prevalent than individual evil, it "is more subtle and penetrating and devastating."² No matter how well intentioned, such committed individuals "must battle blindly with the forces of darkness. There will seem to be few, if any, clear successes."³ Given the unfavourable odds for those struggling with or those victimized by group evil, could they be assisted in any way if they were to recognize the signs of this malady sooner rather than later? Max Frisch's 1961 drama *Andorra*⁴ serves as a brilliant "example of these diffuse cancerous forces at work. . . ."⁵

Whether acting alone or as part of a group, "every single human act is ultimately the result of an individual choice."⁶ Consequently individual and group evil share several characteristics and any delineation of the latter should begin with a recapitulation of the former's characteristics. They are: victimization of body and/or spirit, failure to recognize others as autonomous, depersonalization of others, unmitigated narcissism, the unsubordinated use of power, lying and scapegoating, and the total inability to handle criticism. Yet despite the similarities of these two phenomena, certain permutations of individual evil become apparent only in situations where group evil holds sway.

First, let us examine the drama for shared aspects of individual and group evil. Does anyone die before his or her time? Two individuals are murdered. In violation of his duty as host, the innkeeper stones the Señora to death. (528, 544, 547) She is the biological mother of Andri - the drama's central figure - and a member of the *Schwarzen*. She resides in a country not far from Andorra - the drama's locale. Andri - also the son of the Andorran teacher - is condemned to death and led to his execution in the twelfth and final scene. (557) But in these two instances, death cannot be attributed solely to the innkeeper or the soldiers who carry out the death sentence. With rare exception, all the other characters in Frisch's play contribute to these murders. In order for them to take place, a societal system, which would

allow and even encourage such eventualities, not only had to be devised, but also sustained. Virtually everyone's cooperation is required.

Though Andri issues from the affair between the Señora and the Andorran teacher, Can, the latter takes him from his mother (with her approval) and returns home, soon after the child's birth. His rationale reconfirms one of Andorra's long held beliefs: "An Andorran, they say, doesn't get involved with a woman from over there, let alone have a child with her." (533) Fearing the anger of his fellow Andorrans, just as much as the Señora feared the wrath of her fellow citizens, and in bitter, in expressed contrast to his calling, the teacher lies about the origins of his son. He claims to have saved a Jewish infant from certain death at the hands of the *Schwarzen*. (519) To consider themselves superior to the *Schwarzen*, and contrary to their ingrained prejudices, the Andorrans treat Andri well throughout his early years. (533) Subsequently, however, the young man's mere presence reminds the Andorrans day after day that they do not hold greater moral authority than their neighbours for they also detest Jews. Their self-image thus assaulted, they project their moral insufficiency onto Andri and render his life difficult. Through the means of a classic psychological defence mechanism, through projection,⁷ they assign him the role of the proverbial scapegoat.

One example of such mistreatment represents a vast array. Though the lad aspires to the carpenter's trade and exhibits the appropriate skill, he is repeatedly told he lacks the requisite talent. Before long he is coerced into soliciting orders, for which, due to his supposed Jewish heritage, he is more aptly suited. (486) Given the context just cited, Scott Peck's description of scapegoating and its relationship to evil assume additional meaning. "Evil was defined as the use of power to destroy the spiritual growth of others for the purpose of defending and preserving the integrity of our own sick selves. In short, it is scapegoating."⁸

The arrival of Andri's biological mother and her subsequent demise affords the Andorrans the allegedly legal means to rid themselves of Andri and simultaneously the reminder of *their* moral deficiency. Unless someone is found responsible for her death, the neighbouring *Schwarzen* will invade Andorra to avenge her loss. As stated above, the Andorran innkeeper kills the Señora. And yet in an obvious effort to save himself as well as his fellow citizens, he proclaims repeatedly in both word and deed that it was Andri who threw the fatal stone. (543-547) Once again scapegoating and lying are brought into closest conjunction with one another.

Annihilation of the body and deprivation of the spirit. Failure to acknowledge the other as separate. Depersonalization. Inordinate pride. Scapegoating and lying. How familiar are these tentacles of individual evil as they spread their lethal poison throughout this drama's core!

However, there are other signs of evil, of group evil, which are not as readily apparent. After Andri's execution, all the Andorrans who might have figured in his death are brought to trial. Their testimony proves that virtually no one assumed responsibility for Andri's death *at the time* he was killed. Under subsequent questioning, only the priest admits his guilt. (509) How can such a "fragmentation of conscience"⁹ occur, as Peck defines this psychological phenomenon? The answer may lie in specialization. While specialization fosters greater efficiency, it also encourages the individual's abnegation of responsibility. Consequently, no one deems him-or herself responsible for the actions of the group, let alone for society as a whole.

As already stated, the soldiers - one of Andorra's groups - implement Andri's death sentence. Presumably the Andorran government (with the consent of its citizenry) had consigned them to that task, and their visual separation from other groups emphasizes its importance and, by extension, their importance; they dress in black and carry rifles. (543) As any country hoping to function smoothly, Andorra represents a conglomerate, an interdependence of several groups. Although the majority of the drama's characters do have names, these figures represent their groups and are therefore only indicated by their societal role in the cast of characters: the priest, the physician, the carpenter. (462) They do not see themselves primarily as individuals, but as members of their profession or guild. By the same token they choose to see Andri not simply as a young man trying to find his place in their midst, but only as a member of his alleged ethnic group. By means of this double depersonalization (with the exception of his stepmother and half-sister), all the Andorrans contribute to the final debacle.

It is therefore significant that only Andri and Barblin - his half-sister - are identified by their given names in the drama's list of characters. (462) At the outset of the drama, these two love each other and as Viktor Frankl states so beautifully in *Ärztliche Seelsorge*, the love relationship constitutes the antithesis of all stereotyping, of all depersonalization; "... love means after all to experience another in his or her total uniqueness and singularity!"¹⁰ And again: "When we love someone the beloved individual is essentially apprehended as a being, *who not only exists, but who exists in this and in no other way*; he or she will be understood as a thou and as such will be subsumed into another I."¹¹

If groups are required not only for a society to function well, but also for its mere survival, how are they formed? Both self-and other-selection determine membership. For example, an undergraduate hoping to become a physician must demonstrate both the desire - self-selection - and the ability to enter medical school. Meeting the standards of the admissions board - other-selection, the student's legitimate pride in his or her achievement can, if allowed to do so, evolve into a sense of superiority in regard to other

individuals and other groups. With few exceptions, the Andorrans feel themselves to be superior to Andri and all the *Schwarzen*. Realizing that the *Schwarzen* do not favour persons of Jewish extraction and that consequently his fellow citizens wish to consider themselves of higher moral stature than their neighbours, the teacher crafts a most suitable lie about his son's alleged origin. Only at first glance, however.

As group character tends to reinforce itself, such groups would not easily tolerate internal or external criticism. Unfortunately, Andri's presence from the day of his entry into the Andorran community serves as an unceasing critique of its desired, though erroneous, self-image. Such repetitive assaults, whether real or perceived, constitute stress. Whatever its nature, sustained stress frequently engenders a two-fold response. On the one hand, an individual (and the group of which he is a part) becomes more self-centred, more narcissistic. Whether on a conscious or subconscious level, the individual's thinking develops along the following lines: as my/our needs are not being met, why should I make any effort to meet your needs or those of others? In brief, regression takes place.

Yet another aspect likewise bears consideration. To survive a disagreeable situation, sensitivity toward self as well as others is sometimes deliberately blunted. One attempts not to feel at all or, at least, less acutely. This defence mechanism intends to mitigate pain.¹² Despite all attempts to the contrary, few can tolerate such trying circumstances indefinitely. A glance at Frankl's *...trotzdem Ja zum Leben sagen: Ein Psychologe erlebt das Konzentrationslager* suffices to validate the last assertion.¹³ While examining the causes, which led to the atrocities at Mylai during the Vietnam War, Dr. Peck draws the following conclusion: "Stress is the test for goodness. The truly good are they who in time of stress do not desert their integrity, their maturity, their sensitivity."¹⁴ Or as Scott Peck observes in his best seller *The Road Less Traveled*: "One measure - and perhaps the best measure - of a person's greatness is the capacity for suffering."¹⁵

But if those subject to continual vexation cannot or will not alter their responses to establish even a superficial stability, the supposed source of the stress must be identified and preferably eliminated. Note the use of the term "supposed source," for as already indicated the attitude of the Andorrans is the source of their stress, not Andri. He is merely made the convenient scapegoat for their moral failure. And even if waiting for the opportunity to eliminate Andri takes years, so be it. According to the Andorrans, order is restored. Regrettably enough, nothing has been learned. Nothing has changed. (543)

A last point. As mentioned earlier, only two individuals meet their deaths at the hands of the Andorrans: the Señora and her son. At the time of their deaths, according to the majority of the Andorrans, neither is or is

perceived to be Andorran. It is always easier for us to hurt those with whom we do not identify.¹⁶ Sometimes physically, sometimes psychologically, sometimes both, these others are not like ourselves, are not members of our group. Therefore, they do not merit our consideration, let alone our care.

Within the drama, there are exceptions to this rampant stereotyping, the ensuing callousness and inevitable disengagement. Despite their obvious shortcomings, Andri's father, stepmother and half-sister do care for him. However, by the time they acknowledge the truth about his origins, the lie, which the teacher perpetrated decades ago, has assumed a life of its own and its effects could seemingly no longer be reversed. When Andri asks his alleged foster father for his daughter's hand in marriage, the cornered teacher laments. "Some day I'll tell the truth - that's what we mean to do, but lying is a leech that sucks out the life-blood of truth." (497) Even when in the presence of Andri's biological mother, Can resolves to acknowledge his paternity publicly, his serious misgivings quickly surface.

The teacher "I shall tell them that he is my son, our son, their own flesh and blood - "

The Señora "Why don't you go?"

The teacher "And if they don't want the truth?" (520)

To the eight hallmarks of individual evil, dominating the two previous discussions, can now be added eight of the most significant aspects of group evil, which *Andorra* devastatingly incorporates. They are: 1. abdication of responsibility for one's own actions as well as those of the group, 2. incapacity to visualize ourselves or others as sovereign individuals, rather than solely members of a group, 3. inordinate pride in adherence to a group, 4. marked intolerance of chronic stress, 5. increased narcissism, 6. lowered threshold of sensitivity toward self and others, 7. overemphasis on the dissimilarities between ourselves and others, rather than acknowledgement of our similarities, 8. despite good intentions and concerted efforts, the individual's total inability to slow or alter the outcome preordained by the group.

At the outset, mention was made that in our day-to-day dealings with others, group evil seems far more prevalent, far more damaging than individual evil. Perhaps then the timeworn formula - to be forewarned is to be forearmed - rings true after all. Or in Scott Peck's words: "We cannot even begin to deal with a disease until we identify it by its proper name. The treatment of an illness begins with its diagnosis."¹⁷

Notes

1. M[organ] Scott Peck, *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1983, p. 212.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Max Frisch, 'Andorra: Stück in zwölf Bildern,' *Gesammelte Werke*, Hans Mayer (ed), vol. 4, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt, 1986, pp. 461-561. Unless otherwise noted, all quotes and paraphrases from this drama and followed by page references are taken from the edition just cited.
5. Peck, p. 212.
6. Ibid., p. 215.
7. Phebe Cramer, *Protecting the Self: Defense Mechanisms in Action*, Guilford, New York, London, 2006, pp. 70-92.
8. Peck, p. 119.
9. Peck, p. 217. The recounting of the March 1964 fatal stabbing of 28-year-old Catherine Genovese near her home in Queens, NY has undergone multiple revisions within the intervening years. In his *New York Times* article, 'Kitty, 40 Years Later,' of 8 February 2004, Jim Rasenberger recapitulates the diverse analyses proffered throughout the subsequent decades. Amongst a wealth of details, he also mentions the research of two psychologists: Bibb Latane and John Darley. In an attempt to characterize the detached behaviour of the bystanders - the number varies significantly from account to account - Latane and Darley initiated a term rather akin to "fragmentation of conscience." They concluded that those observing and/or hearing the attacks suffered from a "diffusion of responsibility" and consequently, "the greater the number of bystanders who view an emergency, the smaller the chance that any will intervene. . . . Kitty Genovese would have been better off, in other words, had one witness seen or heard her attack, rather than the reputed 38." Let me conclude in stating the obvious once again: the victim could not afford to reflect upon the motivations of the witnesses. For her, this was not a matter of theory, but practice; for her, the outcome took the worst possible turn.
10. Viktor E. Frankl, *Ärztliche Seelsorge: Grundlagen der Logotherapie und Existenzanalyse*, 4th edn., 1987, Fischer, Frankfurt, 1991, p.166-167.
11. Ibid., p. 167.
12. Peck, p. 221.

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13. Viktor E. Frankl, . . . *trotzdem Ja zum Leben sagen: Ein Psychologe erlebt das Konzentrationslager*, 9th edn., 1982, DTV, München, 1990.
 14. Peck, p. 222. For a discussion of the term he coined: “psychic numbing,” consult Robert Jay Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide*, Basic Books, New York, 1986, p. 442.
 15. M[organ] Scott Peck, *The Road Less Traveled: A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1978, p. 76.
 16. Peck, *People of the Lie*, p. 245.
 17. *Ibid.*, p. 120.

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—, ‘Bilder von Gut und Böse.’ *Werke*, vol. 1, Schriften zur Philosophie, Kösel, München; Lambert Schneider, Heidelberg, 1962.

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Previous Publications

Excerpts from this study have already been published in a variety of venues. In chronological order they are:

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